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## **TYPES OF PHILOSOPHIC DRAMA**

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# TYPES OF PHILOSOPHIC DRAMA

EDITED BY

ROBERT METCALF SMITH, PH.D.

PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH, LEHIGH UNIVERSITY



NEW YORK  
PRENTICE-HALL, INC.

1928

808.82  
1005

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



## FOREWORD

The types of philosophical drama in this volume have been chosen not for their dramatic values, since it may be questioned whether some of them, from the point of view of the theater, are dramas at all. They reveal rather the struggles of representative minds from antiquity to the present era to explain the relation of man to the force or forces that we call God or the Universe. "To justify the ways of God to man" has called forth the best efforts of the greatest minds not only in philosophy but also in dramatic literature. What is the nature of the power or powers back of the universe? Is it wise, just, and powerful; a friend or an enemy of mankind? What is the explanation of evil and suffering? What, in the face of inexplicable disaster, shall man do? Shall he rebel, revolt, resist, curse, placate, trust, love, bless, or reverence this power, or resign himself to it? All of these attitudes will be found in the course of these dramas. Here are gathered together representative figures of piety or protest, the Prometheus and Faust types, the Ancient and Medieval Saint, the Renaissance Pagan, the Heroic Christian, the Romantic Revolver, the Romantic Humanitarian, and the Defiant Fatalist.

The book is planned for the last part of a course in "Types of World Drama," in which the point of view is intentionally shifted from considerations of dramatic technique and theatrical effectiveness to problems of thought. It may serve also as an introduction, or adjunct, to courses in philosophy proper; and as valuable collateral reading in connection with the study of Goethe's *Faust*, a masterwork best reserved for more advanced study, preferably in the original.

To Charles Scribner's Sons, I am indebted for permission to reprint the translation of Andrieev's *The Life of Man* by

Meader and Scott, and the prose poem by Turgenev. Especially am I under obligation to Mrs. Morris Jastrow, Jr., and to J. B. Lippincott & Company, for permission to utilize material from Professor Morris Jastrow, Jr.'s scholarly treatise and translation of *The Book of Job*.

I am glad to acknowledge the aid and advice of my colleagues of the Department of English at Lehigh University in working out with me in conference and classroom this course in world drama. Particularly am I indebted to Mr. H. G. Rhoads for the Appendix and for assistance in preparing the manuscript, and also to Professor Myron J. Luch for revisions and corrections.

ROBERT METCALF SMITH

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# THE BOOK OF JOB



## INTRODUCTION

The interpretation of the Book of Job, as of other books of the Bible, is controversial, and authorities rarely agree with one another. The reader will find in the following commentary the point of view of leading modern scholars, but he will need to go to other writers for confirmation or disagreement on many points.

The text printed here, the King James, or Authorized Version, is generally acknowledged to be the finest literary rendering, though perhaps not the most accurate. The divisions of the book have been given suitable headings, and the poetry and prose passages have been so printed. Since part of the last speech of Job in the Symposium is now believed to have been removed and lost, and portions of Zophar's third speech have been intentionally torn from their original places and pieced into the remainder, in order to alter the trend of Job's final answer, the closing speeches of the Symposium require the reverse process of rearrangement if the poem is to be read as it was originally written. I have followed in this instance, rearrangements supplied by such modern scholars as Arthur S. Peake and Morris J. Jastrow, Jr., but I have relied chiefly upon Jastrow, since complete agreement among scholars cannot be obtained. Where serious mistranslations, or alterations occur that pervert the original meaning, notes giving the modern corrections have been added. For further corrections of this kind, the translation, notes, and introduction by Morris Jastrow, Jr., (Lippincott, 1920) will be found most illuminating.

### Authorship and Content.

In common with other books of the Bible, the Book of Job, from the point of view of modern scholarship, is not the work of one author, nor can it be satisfactorily harmonized, or inter-

preted, like Milton's *Paradise Lost*, as a literary unit. The book has grown by the well-known process of literary accretion, and in its present form is an accumulation of philosophic wisdom, poetry, and folklore, the labor of many years and many hands. In contrast to our conception of personal literary ownership with jealously guarded copyrights, the orientals regarded their tales as everybody's property, to be altered, adapted, or augmented to suit the special purpose of the narrator. In other words, literary plagiarism did not exist.

We have in the Book of Job first, a brief popular tale of unknown and non-Hebraic origin, and one of great antiquity. Into this prose tale has been inserted a succession of poetic and philosophic interpolations of great beauty and imaginative power.

### Outline.

1. The Folk Tale—Chapters 1, 2; Epilogue 42 (10-17)
2. The Philosophical Symposium—Chapters 3-27; 29-31; Epilogue 42 (7-9)
3. The Later Additions
  - (a) The Search for Wisdom, Chapter 28, (an independent poem with no reference to Job)
  - (b) The Four Elihu Speeches, Chapters 32-37
  - (c) The Nature Poems, Chapters 38, 39; 40 (15-24), 41
  - (d) Epilogue to the Additions, Chapters 40 (1-14), 42 (1-6)

### The Folk Tale.

The whole of the Hebrew version of the simple folk tale is contained in the prose Chapters 1, 2, and 42 (10-17). This should be read first, as a unit. It describes a succession of calamities inflicted as a test upon Job, the richest of the sons of the East, and a pious nomad of the desert, who always feared God and eschewed evil. The test is applied at the suggestion of Satan, who maintains that Job's piety is merely the result of the prosperity God has given him, and that it will not endure the test of misfortune; piety must be tested by suffering. In spite of his great afflictions, Job remains a sinless man. He refuses to follow his wife's petulant advice to



"Curse God and die", and accepts without question his misfortunes with the words: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." In all his trials he never sins, even with his lips. Because of this steadfast piety and devotion, God restores to Job his sons and daughters and blesses him with twice his former prosperity. This graphic story teaches that he who endures in piety the afflictions of life shall finally receive God's reward and blessing.

### The Philosophical Symposium.

It is not the Folk Tale section of the Book of Job, however, that has received the admiration of the centuries, but the main poem, variously called an argumentative drama or a debate on the problem of evil and the mystery of suffering. In this heated discussion between Job and his friends, we discover a very different Job, no longer the sheik of the desert, but a Hebrew poet-philosopher in contention with three orthodox traditionalists of the Jewish faith. This Job, after pronouncing a tremendous curse against existence, stoutly challenges the sublime assurance of his opponents that the universe is governed by a Power invariably actuated by justice and mercy. He never questions the existence or the infinite power and wisdom of God, but His benevolence and justice. In this world, Job points out, the righteous frequently suffer while the wicked flourish like the green bay tree. Against Job's many arguments and illustrations, the three Comforters reply with variations of essentially the same argument—that God is just, as well as wise and almighty; that evil and suffering are punishments for wrong doing; that Job, whether he acknowledges it or not, is a sinner and should humble himself and repent; that the wicked may flourish for the time being but at last are punished. Against them Job indignantly maintains that he has not sinned, that if God were not arbitrary the good would not suffer, that one cannot bring one's case before God without having already questioned His justice.

When "the words of Job are ended", [Chapters 31 (49); 32 (1)] the three Comforters have no more to say; they yield to his vigorous argument; "Job is justified in their eyes". The second epilogue, which originally belonged to this philosophi-

cal debate, Chapter 42 (7-9), represents God as vindicating Job and commanding the Comforters to make sacrifices because they had not spoken what was right. The vindication suggests that God himself recognized the justice of Job's protests, and commended rather than reprehended a man who dared to maintain his integrity and use his intelligence in trying to solve the riddles of existence, or as Moulton phrases it, "that the bold faith of Job, which could appeal to God against the justice of God's own visitations, was more acceptable to Him than the servile adoration of the Friends, who had sought to distort the facts in order to magnify God". This Symposium, depicting Job as a philosophical protester, may also be considered a unit, but how different are its teachings from those of the folk tale. The Folk Tale portrays a pious sheik of the desert rewarded after afflictions for his unquestioning patience and submission to the Divine Will; the Symposium reveals a stubborn contender for his own righteousness, a brilliant philosophical debater who triumphs over his opponents, and finally is commended by the Divine Will he has impugned.

These two parts passed later into the hands of pious redactors and emendators, who felt called upon to tone down the skeptical trend of Job's audacious argument and to answer it with further additions.

### The Additions.

Among these later additions are the four speeches of Elihu, inconsistent with one another (Chapters 32-37), which are thought to be separate compositions, each one written to answer the argument of Job. They contain further defenses of the traditional argument offered by the three Comforters, that suffering is punishment for sin.

Similarly, the speeches delivered by the Lord in Chapters 38-41 are independent nature poems introduced here to demonstrate the splendor and majesty of God in the phenomena of the Heavens, and in the marvels of animal creation.

These proofs of God's irresistible power were inserted apparently as a final crushing retort to the argumentative Job of the Symposium. The Finite cannot contend with the Infinite, much less penetrate or understand His inscrutable ways.

In the third epilogue to these additions we are presented with a third Job—no longer the daring protester, but a self-confessed sinner in presumption, who, when challenged by God for darkening counsel, repents of everything he has said, and condemns himself as utterly worthless. [Chapters 40 (1-14); 42 (1-6)].

In these three parts we have, therefore, three differing conceptions of Job: (1) the Sinless Job of the Folk Tale; (2) the Vindicated Job of the Symposium; (3) the Repentant Job of the later Additions; and three corresponding solutions offered for the mystery of pain and suffering: (1) as a test of virtue; (2) as the workings of an inscrutable Providence; (3) as a punishment for sin.

These are the ways in which the Book of Job has been employed through the centuries to express the varying moods, faiths, questionings, and aspirations of the Jewish race in its long struggle to maintain itself in the face of repeated defeats, exiles, persecutions, and disasters.

### Date of Composition.

The original prose Folk Tale is thought by Professor C. F. Kent to have been written down by the Hebrews during the early years of the Babylonian exile (586-576 B. C.). The poetic Symposium he assigns to about 450 B. C., after the re-establishment of Jerusalem; the later portions, according to W. Taylor Smith, may have been written a century or more after the Symposium.

### Characters.

Satan is not the Devil as popularly conceived, but a figure high in the ranks of God's hierarchy who plays the rôle of the adversary, the tester for righteousness among the sons of men, "the chief prosecuting attorney of earth". The three Comforters are not sharply drawn. Eliphaz, the oldest and most dignified, a philosopher and theologian, is the first to voice the current dogma that suffering is always the result of sin. Bildad, the traditionalist, rests his arguments on the wisdom and experience of the past. Zophar is the dogmatist who storms at Job with bluster and accusation. Elihu, in

contrast, is a vigorous, conceited young man eager to try out his arguments on Job.

### Literary Value.

Among the many passages of unsurpassed imaginative power in the poem may be mentioned for special attention the magnificent nature poems and the curse of Job. The curse should be compared with the curses uttered by *Prometheus* in Aeschylus and in Shelley, by *Manfred* in Byron, and by *Man* in Andrieev's drama.

Only the vocabulary of Carlyle can fittingly express the greatness of the Book of Job, the finest literary achievement of the Hebrew race:

"I call that, apart from all theories about it, one of the grandest things ever written with pen. One feels, indeed, as if it were not Hebrew; such a noble universality, different from noble patriotism or sectarianism, reigns in it. A noble Book; all men's Book! It is our first, oldest statement of the never-ending Problem,—man's destiny, and God's ways with him here in this earth. And all in such free flowing outlines; grand in its sincerity, in its simplicity; in its epic melody, and repose of reconciliation. There is the seeing eye, the mildly understanding heart. So *true* every way; true eyesight and vision for all things; material things no less than spiritual: the Horse,—'hast thou clothed his neck with *thunder*?'—he *laughs* at the shaking of the spear!" Such living likenesses were never since drawn. Sublime sorrow, sublime reconciliation; oldest choral melody as of the heart of mankind;—so soft, and great; as the summer midnight, as the world with its seas and stars! There is nothing written, I think, in the Bible or out of it, of equal literary merit.—"

### References.

The commentary above is based principally upon *The Book of Job* by Morris Jastrow, Jr. (Lippincott, 1920); C. F. Kent, *The Growth and Contents of the Old Testament* (Scribners, New York, 1925); W. Taylor Smith's article in *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible* (Scribners, New York, 1909); and



A. S. Peake, *Commentary on the Bible* (Nelson, New York, 1919).

Other illuminating interpretations may be found in R. G. Moulton's *The Modern Reader's Bible* (Macmillan, 1896), J. F. Genung's *Epic of the Inner Life* (Houghton, Mifflin Co., Boston, 1892), John Owen's *Five Great Skeptical Dramas of History* (Putnam, New York, 1896), though all of these commentaries suffer from the initial assumption by the authors of the literary unity of the work. See also *The Story of Job* by the Reverend Minos Devine (Macmillan, New York, 1921). Horace Kallen has interpreted the work as a Greek drama (Dodd, Mead & Co., New York, 1918) and Stuart Walker has arranged it for effective dramatic production as one of his Portmanteau Plays.



TEXT

## THE PROSE FOLK TALE

### CHARACTERS

THE LORD

THE SONS OF GOD

SATAN

JOB

JOB'S WIFE

THE THREE COMFORTERS OF JOB

MESSENGERS

## THE SYMPOSIUM

### CHARACTERS

JOB

ELIPHAZ THE TEMANITE

BILDAD THE SHUHITE

ZOPHAR THE NAAMATHITE

## THE ADDITIONS

### CHARACTERS

ELIHU

JOB

THE LORD AS A VOICE IN THE WHIRLWIND

## THE BOOK OF JOB

### The Prose Folk Tale.

CH. 1

There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil. And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters. His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the East. And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and drink with them. And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them. And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? Then Satan answered the Lord,

and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord.

And there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them: And the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: And behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I



return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

CH. 2

Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord. And the Lord said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one than feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause. And Satan answered the Lord, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.

So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes.

Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God, and die. But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for

they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him. And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven. So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great.

### The Symposium.

#### The Curse of Job.

CH. 3

After this opened Job his mouth, and cursed his day. And Job spake, and said,  
Let the day perish wherein I was born,  
And the night in which it was said, There is a man  
child conceived.

One of the  
greatest  
passages.

Let that day be darkness;  
Let not God regard it from above,  
Neither let the light shine upon it.  
Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it;  
Let a cloud dwell upon it;  
Let the blackness of the day terrify it.  
As for the night, let darkness seize upon it;  
Let it not be joined unto the days of the year,  
Let it not come into the number of the months.  
Lo, let that night be solitary,  
Let no joyful voice come therein.  
Let them curse it that curse the day,  
Who are ready to raise up their mourning.  
Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark;  
Let it look for light, but have none;  
Neither let it see the dawning of the day;  
Because it shut not up the doors of my mother's  
womb,

Nor hid sorrow from mine eyes.  
Why died I not from the womb?  
Why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of  
the belly?  
Why did the knees prevent me?  
Or why the breasts that I should suck?  
For now should I have lain still and been quiet,  
I should have slept: then had I been at rest,  
With kings and counsellors of the earth,  
Which built desolate places for themselves;  
Or with princes that had gold,  
Who filled their houses with silver:  
Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been;  
As infants which never saw light.  
There the wicked cease from troubling;  
And there the weary be at rest.  
There the prisoners rest together;  
They hear not the voice of the oppressor.  
The small and great are there;  
And the servant is free from his master.  
Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery,  
And life unto the bitter in soul;  
Which long for death, but it cometh not;  
And dig for it more than for hid treasures;  
Which rejoice exceedingly,  
And are glad, when they can find the grave?  
Why is light given to a man whose way is hid,  
And whom God hath hedged in?  
For my sighing cometh before I eat,  
And my roarings are poured out like the waters.  
For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon  
me,  
And that which I was afraid of is come unto me,  
I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was  
I quiet;  
Yet trouble came.

## The First Speech of Eliphaz.

CH. 4

Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said,  
If we essay to commune with thee, wilt thou be  
grieved?

But who can withhold himself from speaking?

Behold, thou hast instructed many,

And thou hast strengthened the weak hands,

Thy words have upholden him that was falling,

And thou hast strengthened the feeble knees.

But now it is come upon thee, and thou faintest;

It toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.

Is not this thy fear, thy confidence,

Thy hope, and the uprightness of thy ways?

Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being  
innocent?

Or where were the righteous cut off?

Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity,

And sow wickedness, reap the same.

By the blast of God they perish,

And by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed.

The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the fierce  
lion,

And the teeth of the young lions, are broken.

The old lion perisheth for lack of prey,

And the stout lion's whelps are scattered abroad.

Now a thing was secretly brought to me,

And mine ear received a little thereof.

In thoughts from the visions of the night,

When deep sleep falleth on men,

Fear came upon me, and trembling,

Which made all my bones to shake.

Then a spirit passed before my face;

The hair of my flesh stood up:

It stood still, but I could not discern the form  
thereof:

An image was before mine eyes,

Eliphaz  
says that  
Job is  
suffering be-  
cause he  
has sinned.

There was silence, and I heard a voice, saying,  
Shall mortal man be more just than God?  
Shall a man be more pure than his Maker?  
Behold, he put no trust in his servants;  
And his angels he charged with folly:  
How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay,  
Whose foundation is in the dust,  
Which are crushed before the moth?  
They are destroyed from morning to evening:  
They perish forever without any regarding it.  
Doth not their excellency which is in them go away?  
They die, even without wisdom.  
CH. 5. Call now, if there be any that will answer thee;  
And to which of the saints wilt thou turn?  
For wrath killeth the foolish man,  
And envy slayeth the silly one.  
I have seen the foolish taking root:  
But suddenly I cursed his habitation.  
His children are far from safety,  
And they are crushed in the gate,  
Neither is there any to deliver them.  
Whose harvest the hungry eateth up,  
And taketh it even out of the thorns,  
And the robber swalloweth up their substance.  
Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust,  
Neither doth trouble spring out of the ground;  
Yet man is born unto trouble,  
As the sparks fly upward.  
I would seek unto God,  
And unto God would I commit my cause:  
Which doeth great things and unsearchable;  
Marvellous things without number:  
Who giveth rain upon the earth,  
And sendeth waters upon the fields:  
To set up on high those that be low;  
That those which mourn may be exalted to safety.  
He disappointeth the devices of the crafty,

So that their hands cannot perform their enterprise.  
He taketh the wise in their own craftiness:  
And the counsel of the froward is carried headlong.  
They meet with darkness in the daytime,  
And grope in the noonday as in the night.  
But he saveth the poor from the sword, from their  
mouth,  
And from the hand of the mighty.  
So the poor hath hope,  
And iniquity stoppeth her mouth.  
Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth:  
Therefore despise not thou the chastening of the  
Almighty:  
For he maketh sore, and bindeth up:  
He woundeth, and his hands make whole.  
He shall deliver thee in six troubles:  
Yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.  
In famine he shall redeem thee from death:  
And in war from the power of the sword.  
Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue:  
Neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when  
it cometh.  
At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh:  
Neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the  
earth.  
For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the  
field:  
And the beasts of the field shall be at peace with  
thee.  
And thou shalt know that thy tabernacle shall be  
in peace;  
And thou shalt visit thy habitation, and shalt not  
sin.  
Thou shalt know also that thy seed shall be great,  
And thine offspring as the grass of the earth.  
Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age,  
Like as a shock of corn cometh in his season.



Lo this, we have searched it, so it is;  
Hear it, and know thou it for thy good.

The First Answer of Job.

CH. 6

But Job answered and said,  
Oh that my grief were thoroughly weighed,  
And my calamity laid in the balances together!  
For now it would be heavier than the sand of the  
sea:

Therefore my words are swallowed up.  
For the arrows of the Almighty are within me,  
The poison whereof drinketh up my spirit:  
The terrors of God do set themselves in array against  
me.

Doth the wild ass bray when he hath grass?  
Or loweth the ox over his fodder?  
Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without  
salt?

Or is there any taste in the white of an egg?  
The things that my soul refused to touch  
Are as my sorrowful meat.

Oh that I might have my request;  
And that God would grant me the thing that I long  
for!

Even that it would please God to destroy me;  
That he would let loose his hand, and cut me off!  
Then should I yet have comfort;  
Yea, I would harden myself in sorrow: let him not  
spare;

For I have not concealed the words of the Holy One.  
What is my strength, that I should hope?  
And what is mine end, that I should prolong my life?  
Is my strength the strength of stones?  
Or is my flesh of brass?  
Is not my help in me?  
And is wisdom driven quite from me?

Job longs  
for death,  
and reas-  
serts his  
innocence.

To him that is afflicted pity should be shewed from  
his friend;  
But he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty.  
My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook,  
And as the stream of brooks they pass away;  
Which are blackish by reason of the ice,  
And wherein the snow is hid:  
What time they wax warm, they vanish:  
When it is hot, they are consumed out of their place.  
The paths of their way are turned aside;  
They go to nothing, and perish.  
The troops of Tema looked,  
The companies of Sheba waited for them.  
They were confounded because they had hoped;  
They came thither, and were ashamed.  
For now ye are nothing:  
Ye see my casting down, and are afraid.  
Did I say, Bring unto me?  
Or, Give a reward for me of your substance?  
Or, Deliver me from the enemy's hand?  
Or, Redeem me from the hand of the mighty?  
Teach me, and I will hold my tongue:  
And cause me to understand wherein I have erred.  
How forcible are right words!  
But what doth your arguing reprove?  
Do ye imagine to reprove words,  
And the speeches of one that is desperate, which are  
as wind?  
Yea, ye overwhelm the fatherless  
And ye dig a pit for your friend.  
Now therefore be content, look upon me;  
For it is evident unto you if I lie.  
Return, I pray you, let it not be iniquity;  
Yea, return again, my righteousness is in it.  
Is there iniquity in my tongue?  
Cannot my taste discern perverse things?  
Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth?

Are not his days also like the days of an hireling?  
As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow,  
And as an hireling looketh for the reward of his  
work:

So am I made to possess months of vanity,  
And wearisome nights are appointed to me.  
When I lie down, I say,  
When shall I arise, and the night be gone?  
And I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawn-  
ing of the day.

My flesh is clothed with worms and clouds of dust;  
My skin is broken and become loathsome.  
My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle,  
And are spent without hope.

O remember that my life is wind:  
Mine eye shall no more see good.  
The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no  
more:

Thine eyes are upon me, and I am not.  
As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away:  
So he that goeth down to the grave shall come up  
no more.

He shall return no more to his house,  
Neither shall his place know him any more.  
Therefore I will not refrain my mouth:  
I will speak in the anguish of my spirit;  
I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.

Am I a sea, or a whale,  
That thou settest a watch over me?  
When I say, My bed shall comfort me,  
My couch shall ease my complaint;  
Then thou scarest me with dreams,  
And terrifiest me through visions:  
So that my soul chooseth strangling,  
And death rather than my life.  
I loathe it; I would not live alway:  
Let me alone; for my days are vanity.

What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him?  
 And that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?  
 And that thou shouldest visit him every morning,  
 And try him every moment?  
 How long wilt thou not depart from me,  
 Nor let me alone till I swallow down my spittle?  
 I have sinned,<sup>1</sup> what shall I do unto thee, O thou pre-  
 server of men?  
 Why hast thou set me as a mark against thee,  
 So that I am a burden to myself?  
 And why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and  
 take away mine iniquity?  
 For now shall I sleep in the dust;  
 And thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall  
 not be.

### The First Speech of Bildad.

CH. 8

Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,  
 How long wilt thou speak these things?  
 And how long shall the words of thy mouth be like  
 a strong wind?  
 Doth God pervert judgment?  
 Or doth the Almighty pervert justice?  
 If thy children have sinned against him,  
 And he have cast them away for their transgression;  
 If thou wouldest seek unto God betimes;  
 And make thy supplication to the Almighty;  
 If thou wert pure and upright;  
 Surely now he would awake for thee,  
 And make the habitation of thy righteousness pros-  
 perous.  
 Though thy beginning was small,  
 Yet thy latter end should greatly increase.

Bildad  
 asserts that  
 God is just,  
 and is pun-  
 ishing Job  
 because of  
 his sins.

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<sup>1</sup> Jastrow says "I have sinned" is a later addition "to tone down the bitterness by having Job at least confess he has sinned." If Job admit he has sinned, he destroys his whole argument (p. 233).

For enquire, I pray thee, of the former age,  
And prepare thyself to the search of their fathers:  
(For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing,  
Because our days upon earth are a shadow:)  
Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee,  
And utter words out of their heart?  
Can the rush grow up without mire?  
Can the flag grow without water?  
Whilst it is yet in his greenness, and not cut down,  
It withereth before any other herb.  
So are the paths of all that forget God;  
And the hypocrite's hope shall perish:  
Whose hope shall be cut off,  
And whose trust shall be a spider's web.  
He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand:  
He shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure.  
He is green before the sun,  
And his branch shooteth forth in his garden.  
His roots are wrapped about the heap,  
And seeth the place of stones.  
If he destroy him from his place,  
Then it shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee.  
Behold, this is the joy of his way,  
And out of the earth shall others grow,  
Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man,  
Neither will he help the evil doers:  
Till he fill thy mouth with laughing,  
And thy lips with rejoicing.  
They that hate thee shall be clothed with shame;  
And the dwelling place of the wicked shall come  
to nought.

### The Second Answer of Job.

CH. 9

Then Job answered and said,  
I know it is so of a truth:  
But how should man be just with God?

If he will contend with him,  
He cannot answer him one of a thousand.  
He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength:  
Who hath hardened himself against him, and hath  
prospered?  
Which removeth the mountains, and they know not:  
Which overturneth them in his anger.  
Which shaketh the earth out of her place,  
And the pillars thereof tremble.  
Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not;  
And sealeth up the stars.  
Which alone spreadeth out the heavens,  
And treadeth upon the waves of the sea.  
Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades,  
And the chambers of the south.  
Which doeth great things past finding out;  
Yea, and wonders without number.  
Lo, he goeth by me, and I see him not:  
He passeth on also, but I perceive him not.  
Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him?  
Who will say unto him, What doest thou?  
If God will not withdraw his anger,  
The proud helpers do stoop under him.  
How much less shall I answer him,  
And choose out my words to reason with him?  
Whom, though I were righteous, yet would I not  
answer,  
But I would make supplication to my judge.  
If I had called, and he had answered me;  
Yet would I not believe that he had hearkened unto  
my voice.  
For he breaketh me with a tempest,  
And multiplieth my wounds without cause.  
He will not suffer me to take my breath,  
But filleth me with bitterness.  
If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong:  
And if of judgment, who shall set me a time to plead?



A man cannot contend with God without already having questioned His justice.

If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me:

If I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.

Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my soul:

I would despise my life.

This is one thing, therefore I said it,

He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.

If the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent.

The earth is given into the hand of the wicked:

He covereth the faces of the judges thereof;

If not, where, and who is he?

Now my days are swifter than a post:

They flee away, they see no good.

They are passed away as the swift ships:

As the eagle that hasteth to the prey.

If I say, I will forget my complaint,

I will leave off my heaviness, and comfort myself:

I am afraid of all my sorrows,

I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.

If I be wicked,

Why then labour I in vain?

If I wash myself with snow water,

And make my hands never so clean;

Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch,

And mine own clothes shall abhor me.

For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him,

And we should come together in judgment.

Neither is there any daysman betwixt us,

That might lay his hand upon us both.

Let him take his rod away from me,

And let not his fear terrify me:

Then would I speak, and not fear him;

But it is not so with me.

## CH. 10

Job repeats  
his accusa-  
tion that  
God treats  
the good  
and the  
wicked  
alike; and  
he reaffirms  
his sinless-  
ness.

My soul is weary of my life;  
I will leave my complaint upon myself;  
I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.  
I will say unto God, Do not condemn me;  
Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.  
Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress,  
That thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands,  
And shine upon the counsel of the wicked?  
Hast thou eyes of flesh?  
Or seest thou as man seeth?  
Are thy days as the days of man?  
Are thy years as man's days,  
That thou enquirest after mine iniquity, and search-  
est after my sin?  
Thou knowest that I am not wicked;  
And there is none that can deliver out of thine hand.  
Thine hands have made me and fashioned me  
Together round about; yet thou dost destroy me.  
Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as  
the clay;  
And wilt thou bring me into dust again?  
Hast thou not poured me out as milk,  
And curdled me like cheese?  
Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh,  
And hast fenced me with bones and sinews.  
Thou hast granted me life and favour  
And thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.  
And these things hast thou hid in thine heart:  
I know that this is with thee.  
If I sin, then thou markest me,  
And thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.  
If I be wicked, woe unto me;  
And if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head.  
I am full of confusion;  
Therefore see thou mine affliction;  
For it increaseth. Thou huntest me as a fierce lion:  
And again thou shewest thyself marvellous upon me

Thou renewest thy witnesses against me,  
 And increasest thine indignation upon me;  
 Changes and war are against me.  
 Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of  
 the womb?  
 Oh that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had  
 seen me!  
 I should have been as though I had not been;  
 I should have been carried from the womb to the  
 grave.  
 Are not my days few? cease then,  
 And let me alone, that I may take comfort a little.  
 Before I go whence I shall not return,  
 Even to the land of darkness and the shadow of  
 death;  
 A land of darkness, as darkness itself;  
 And of the shadow of death, without any order,  
 And where the light is as darkness.

Sheol, the  
 Hebrew  
 place of  
 departed  
 spirits

### The First Speech of Zophar.

CH. 11      Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,  
 Should not the multitude of words be answered?  
 And should a man full of talk be justified?  
 Should thy lies make men hold their peace?  
 And when thou mockest, shall no man make thee  
 ashamed?  
 For thou hast said, My doctrine is pure,  
 And I am clean in thine eyes.  
 But oh that God would speak,  
 And open his lips against thee;  
 And that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom,  
 That they are double to that which is!  
 Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than  
 thine iniquity deserveth.  
 Canst thou by searching find out God?  
 Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

Zophar says  
 that Job's  
 iniquity is  
 greater  
 than his  
 sufferings,  
 and warns  
 him to  
 repent

It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do?  
Deeper than hell; what canst thou know?  
The measure thereof is longer than the earth,  
And broader than the sea.  
If he cut off, and shut up,  
Or gather together, then who can hinder him?  
For he knoweth vain men:  
He seeth wickedness also; will he not then consider  
it?  
For vain man would be wise,  
Though man be born like a wild ass's colt.  
If thou prepare thine heart,  
And stretch out thine hands toward him;  
If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away,  
And let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles.  
For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot;  
Yea, thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear:  
Because thou shalt forget thy misery,  
And remember it as waters that pass away.  
And thine age shall be clearer than the noonday;  
Thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.  
And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope;  
Yea, thou shalt dig about thee, and thou shalt take  
thy rest in safety.  
Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee  
afraid;  
Yea, many shall make suit unto thee.  
But the eyes of the wicked shall fail,  
And they shall not escape,  
And their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.

### The Third Answer of Job.

CH. 12

And Job answered and said,  
No doubt but ye are the people,  
And wisdom shall die with you.  
But I have understanding as well as you;

I am not inferior to you:  
Yea, who knoweth not such things as these?  
I am as one mocked of his neighbour,  
Who calleth upon God, and he answereth him:  
The just upright man is laughed to scorn.  
He that is ready to slip with his feet is as a lamp  
despised

In the thought of him that is at ease.  
The tabernacles of robbers prosper,  
And they that provoke God are secure;  
Into whose hand God bringeth abundantly.  
But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee;  
And the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee:  
Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee:  
And the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.

Job agrees  
that God is  
almighty  
and all-  
knowing

Who knoweth not in all these  
That the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?  
In whose hand is the soul of every living thing,  
And the breath of all mankind.  
Doth not the ear try words? and the mouth taste  
his meat?

With the ancient is wisdom;  
And in length of days understanding.  
With him is wisdom and strength,  
He hath counsel and understanding.  
Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built  
again:

He shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.  
Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up:  
Also he sendeth them out, and they overturn the  
earth.

With him is strength and wisdom:  
The deceived and the deceiver are his.  
He leadeth counsellors away spoiled,  
And maketh the judges fools.  
He looseth the bond of kings,  
And girdeth their loins with a girdle.

He leadeth princes away spoiled,  
And overthroweth the mighty.  
He removeth away the speech of the trusty,  
And taketh away the understanding of the aged.  
He poureth contempt upon princes,  
And weakeneth the strength of the mighty.  
He discovereth deep things out of darkness,  
And bringeth out to light the shadow of death.  
He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them:  
He enlargeth the nations, and straiteneth them  
again.

He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people  
of the earth,  
And causeth them to wander in a wilderness where  
there is no way.

They grope in the dark without light,  
And he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man.

CH. 13

Lo, mine eye hath seen all this,  
Mine ear hath heard and understood it.  
What ye know, the same do I know also:  
I am not inferior unto you.

Surely I would speak to the Almighty,  
And I desire to reason with God.

But ye are forgers of lies,  
Ye are all physicians of no value.

O that ye would altogether hold your peace!  
And it should be your wisdom.

Hear now my reasoning,  
And hearken to the pleadings of my lips.

Will ye speak wickedly for God?

And talk deceitfully for him?

Will ye accept his person?

Will ye contend for God?

Is it good that he should search you out?

Or as one man mocketh another, do ye so mock him?

He will surely reprove you,

If ye do secretly accept persons.



Shall not his excellency make you afraid?  
 And his dread fall upon you?  
 Your remembrances are like unto ashes,  
 Your bodies to bodies of clay.  
 Hold your peace, let me alone, that I may speak,  
 And let come on me what will.  
 Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth,  
 And put my life in mine hand?  
 Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him:  
 But I will maintain mine own ways before him.  
 He also shall be my salvation: <sup>2</sup>  
 For an hypocrite shall not come before him.  
 Hear diligently my speech,  
 And my declaration with your ears.  
 Behold now, I have ordered my cause:  
 I know that I shall be justified.  
 Who is he that will plead with me?  
 For now, if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the  
 ghost.  
 Only do not two things unto me:  
 Then will I not hide myself from thee.  
 Withdraw thine hand far from me:  
 And let not thy dread make me afraid.  
 Then call thou, and I will answer:  
 Or let me speak, and answer thou me.  
 How many are mine iniquities and sins?  
 Make me to know my transgression and my sin.  
 Wherefore hidest thou thy face,  
 And holdest me for thine enemy?  
 Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro?  
 And wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?  
 For thou writest bitter things against me,

Job here  
 speaks  
 directly  
 to God

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<sup>2</sup>These three lines beginning, "Though he slay me", according to Jastrow (p. 244), "have long been abandoned by modern scholars", and should read, "Though He slay me, I tremble not"; and the line, "He also shall be my salvation" is a later addition to take "the sharp edge off Job's severe indictment of God."

And makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth.  
Thou putttest my feet also in the stocks, and lookest  
narrowly unto all my paths:

Thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet.  
And he, as a rotten thing, consumeth,  
As a garment that is moth eaten.

## CH. 14

Another  
great  
passage

Man that is born of a woman  
Is of few days, and full of trouble.

He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down:  
He fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.  
And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one,  
And bringest me into judgment with thee?  
Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not  
one.

Seeing his days are determined, the number of his  
months are with thee,

Thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot  
pass;

Turn from him, that he may rest,  
Till he shall accomplish, as an hireling, his day.  
For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that  
it will sprout again,

Nature re-  
news her  
processes;  
Man dis-  
appears

And that the tender branch thereof will not cease.  
Though the root thereof wax old in the earth,  
And the stock thereof die in the ground;  
Yet through the scent of water it will bud,  
And bring forth boughs like a plant.

But man dieth, and wasteth away:  
Yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?

As the waters fail from the sea,  
And the flood decayeth and drieth up:

So man lieth down, and riseth not:  
Till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake,  
Nor be raised out of their sleep.

O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave,  
That thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath  
be past,

That thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!

If a man die, shall he live again?

All the days of my appointed time will I wait,  
Till my change come.

Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee:

Thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.

For now thou numberest my steps:

Dost thou not watch over my sin?

My transgression is sealed up in a bag,

And thou sewest up mine iniquity.

And surely the mountain falling cometh to nought,

And the rock is removed out of his place.

The waters wear the stones:

Thou wastest away the things which grow out of  
the dust of the earth;

And thou destroyest the hope of man.

Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he  
passeth:

Thou changest his countenance, and sendest him  
away.

His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not;

And they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not  
of them.

But his flesh upon him shall have pain,

And his soul within him shall mourn.

### The Second Speech of Eliphaz.

CH. 15

Then answered Eliphaz the Temanite, and said,

Should a wise man utter vain knowledge,

And fill his belly with the east wind?

Should he reason with unprofitable talk?

Or with speeches wherewith he can do no good?

Yea, thou castest off fear,

And restrainest prayer before God.

For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity,

Eliphaz  
reproves  
Job's pre-  
sumption,  
and says  
that Man  
by nature  
is corrupt

And thou choosest the tongue of the crafty.  
Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I:  
Yea, thine own lips testify against thee.  
Art thou the first man that was born?  
Or wast thou made before the hills?  
Hast thou heard the secret of God?  
And dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself?  
What knowest thou, that we know not?  
What understandest thou, which is not in us?  
With us are both the grayheaded and very aged  
men,  
Much elder than thy father.  
Are the consolations of God small with thee?  
Is there any secret thing with thee?  
Why doth thine heart carry thee away?  
And what do thy eyes wink at,  
That thou turnest thy spirit against God,  
And lettest such words go out of thy mouth?  
What is man, that he should be clean?  
And he which is born of a woman, that he should be  
righteous?  
Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints,  
Yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight.  
How much more abominable and filthy is man,  
Which drinketh iniquity like water?  
I will shew thee, hear me;  
And that which I have seen I will declare;  
Which wise men have told from their fathers,  
And have not hid it:  
Unto whom alone the earth was given,  
And no stranger passed among them:  
The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days,  
And the number of years is hidden to the oppressor.  
A dreadful sound is in his ears:  
In prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him.  
He believeth not that he shall return out of darkness,  
And he is waited for of the sword.

He wandereth abroad for bread, saying, Where is it?  
He knoweth that the day of darkness is ready at  
his hand.

Trouble and anguish shall make him afraid;  
They shall prevail against him, as a king ready to  
the battle.

For he stretcheth out his hand against God,  
And strengtheneth himself against the Almighty.

He runneth upon him, even on his neck,  
Upon the thick bosses of his bucklers:  
Because he covereth his face with his fatness,  
And maketh collops of fat on his flanks.

And he dwelleth in desolate cities,  
And in houses which no man inhabiteth,  
Which are ready to become heaps.

He shall not be rich, neither shall his substance  
continue,

Neither shall he prolong the perfection thereof upon  
the earth.

He shall not depart out of darkness;  
The flame shall dry up his branches,  
And by the breath of his mouth shall he go away.  
Let not him that is deceived trust in vanity:

For vanity shall be his recompence.  
It shall be accomplished before his time,  
And his branch shall not be green.

He shall shake off his unripe grape as the vine,  
And shall cast off his flower as the olive.

For the congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate,  
And fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery.  
They conceive mischief, and bring forth vanity,  
And their belly prepareth deceit.

#### The Fourth Answer of Job.

CH. 16

Then Job answered and said,  
I have heard many such things;

Job still  
maintains  
his  
integrity

Miserable comforters are ye all.  
Shall vain words have an end?  
Or what emboldeneth thee that thou answerest?  
I also could speak as ye do:  
If your soul were in my soul's stead,  
I could heap up words against you,  
And shake mine head at you.  
But I would strengthen you with my mouth,  
And the moving of my lips should assuage your  
grief.  
Though I speak, my grief is not asswaged:  
And though I forbear, what am I eased?  
But now he hath made me weary:  
Thou hast made desolate all my company;  
And thou hast filled me with wrinkles, which is a  
witness against me:  
And my leanness rising up in me beareth witness to  
my face.  
He teareth me in his wrath, who hateth me:  
He gnasheth upon me with his teeth;  
Mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me.  
They have gaped upon me with their mouth;  
They have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully;  
They have gathered themselves together against me.  
God hath delivered me to the ungodly,  
And turned me over into the hands of the wicked.  
I was at ease, but he hath broken me asunder:  
He hath also taken me by my neck, and shaken me  
to pieces,  
And set me up for his mark.  
His archers compass me round about,  
He cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare;  
He poureth out my gall upon the ground.  
He breaketh me with breach upon breach,  
He runneth upon me like a giant.  
I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin,  
And defiled my horn in the dust.

My face is foul with weeping,  
And on my eyelids is the shadow of death;  
Not for any injustice in mine hands:  
Also my prayer is pure.  
O earth, cover not thou my blood,  
And let my cry have no place.  
Also now, behold, my witness is in heaven,  
And my record is on high.  
My friends scorn me;  
But mine eye poureth out tears unto God.  
O that one might plead for a man with God,  
As a man pleadeth for his neighbour!  
When a few years are come,  
Then I shall go the way whence I shall not return.  
My breath is corrupt, my days are extinct,  
The graves are ready for me.  
Are there not mockers with me?  
And doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?  
Lay down now, put me in a surety with thee;  
Who is he that will strike hands with me?  
For thou hast hid their heart from understanding:  
Therefore shalt thou not exalt them.  
He that speaketh flattery to his friends,  
Even the eyes of his children shall fail.  
He hath made me also a byword of the people;  
And aforetime I was as a tabret.  
Mine eye also is dim by reason of sorrow,  
And all my members are as a shadow.  
Upright men shall be astonied at this,  
And the innocent shall stir up himself against the  
hypocrite.  
The righteous also shall hold on his way,  
And he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and  
stronger.  
But as for you all, do ye return, and come now:  
For I cannot find one wise man among you.  
My days are past, my purposes are broken off,



Even the thoughts of my heart.  
 They change the night into day:  
 The light is short because of darkness.  
 If I wait, the grave is mine house:  
 I have made my bed in the darkness.  
 I have said to corruption, Thou art my father:  
 To the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister.  
 And where is now my hope?  
 As for my hope, who shall see it?  
 They shall go down to the bars of the pit,  
 When our rest together is in the dust.

### The Second Speech of Bildad.

#### CH. 18

Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,  
 How long will it be ere ye make an end of words?  
 Mark, and afterwards we will speak.  
 Wherefore are we counted as beasts,  
 And reputed vile in your sight?  
 He teareth himself in his anger:  
 Shall the earth be forsaken for thee?  
 And shall the rock be removed out of his place?  
 Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out,  
 And the spark of his fire shall not shine.  
 The light shall be dark in his tabernacle,  
 And his candle shall be put out with him.  
 The steps of his strength shall be straitened,  
 And his own counsel shall cast him down.  
 For he is cast into a net by his own feet,  
 And he walketh upon a snare.  
 The gin shall take him by the heel,  
 And the robber shall prevail against him.  
 The snare is laid for him in the ground,  
 And a trap for him in the way.  
 Terrors shall make him afraid on every side,  
 And shall drive him to his feet.  
 His strength shall be hungerbitten,

Bildad  
 repeats the  
 argument  
 that God  
 punishes  
 the wicked

And destruction shall be ready at his side.  
It shall devour the strength of his skin:  
Even the firstborn of death shall devour his strength,  
His confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle,  
And it shall bring him to the king of terrors.  
It shall dwell in his tabernacle, because it is none  
of his:  
Brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation.  
His roots shall be dried up beneath,  
And above shall his branch be cut off.  
His remembrance shall perish from the earth,  
And he shall have no name in the street.  
He shall be driven from light into darkness,  
And chased out of the world.  
He shall neither have son nor nephew among his  
people,  
Nor any remaining in his dwellings.  
They that come after him shall be astonished at his  
day,  
As they that went before were affrighted.  
Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked,  
And this is the place of him that knoweth not God.

### The Fifth Answer of Job.

CH. 19

Then Job answered and said,  
How long will ye vex my soul,  
And break me in pieces with words?  
These ten times have ye reproached me:  
Ye are not ashamed that ye make yourselves strange  
to me.  
And be it indeed that I have erred,  
Mine error remaineth with myself.  
If indeed ye will magnify yourselves against me,  
And plead against me my reproach:  
Know now that God hath overthrown me,  
And hath compassed me with his net.

Job  
describes  
again his  
afflictions

Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard:  
I cry aloud, but there is no judgment.  
He hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass,  
And he hath set darkness in my paths.  
He hath stripped me of my glory,  
And taken the crown from my head.  
He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone:  
And mine hope hath he removed like a tree.  
He hath also kindled his wrath against me,  
And he counteth me unto him as one of his enemies.  
His troops come together, and raise up their way  
against me,  
And encamp round about my tabernacle.  
He hath put my brethren far from me,  
And mine acquaintance are verily estranged from  
me.  
My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends  
have forgotten me.  
They that dwell in mine house, and my maids, count  
me for a stranger:  
I am alien in their sight.  
I called on my servant, and he gave me no answer;  
I intreated him with my mouth.  
My breath is strange to my wife,  
Though I intreated for the children's sake of mine  
own body.  
Yea, young children despised me;  
I arose, and they spake against me.  
All my inward friends abhorred me:  
And they whom I loved are turned against me.  
My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh,  
And I am escaped with the skin of my teeth.  
Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my  
friends;  
For the hand of God hath touched me.  
Why do ye persecute me as God,  
And are not satisfied with my flesh?

Oh that my words were now written!  
 Oh that they were printed in a book!  
 That they were graven with an iron pen  
 And lead in the rock forever!  
 For I know that my redeemer liveth,  
 And that he shall stand at the latter day upon the  
 earth:  
 And though after my skin worms destroy this body,  
 Yet in my flesh shall I see God: <sup>3</sup>  
 Whom I shall see for myself,  
 And mine eyes shall behold, and not another:  
 Though my reins be consumed within me.  
 But ye should say, Why persecute we him,  
 Seeing the root of the matter is found in me?  
 Be ye afraid of the sword:  
 For wrath bringeth the punishments of the sword,  
 That ye may know there is a judgment.

### The Second Speech of Zophar.

CH. 20

Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,  
 Therefore do my thoughts cause me to answer,  
 And for this I make haste.  
 I have heard the check of my reproach,

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<sup>3</sup> This passage, according to Jastrow, "has been interfered with by pious exegetes of a much later date who tried to twist it into a suggestion of future life". At the time the poem was written the Jews had no such belief in immortality; the future abode was Sheol, a place like the Greek Hades, which Job described (Chapter 10), as "A land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order and where light is as darkness." The passage in Jastrow's translation (p. 265), reads:

"Oh that my words could be inscribed  
 Graven for all times in the rock  
 Then I would know that my defender will arise  
 Even though he arise in the distant future  
 Only under my skin is this indicted  
 And within my flesh do I see these (words)."

Job's reference is to a future earthly vindicator who, (if Job's woes were engraved in a rock, instead of merely within his own frail flesh), would arise in the future and prove that Job's argument was true.

And the spirit of my understanding causeth me to answer.

Zophar  
shows how  
the wicked  
perish

Knowest thou not this of old,  
Since man was placed upon earth,  
That the triumphing of the wicked is short  
And the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment?  
Though his excellency mount up to the heavens,  
And his head reach unto the clouds;  
Yet he shall perish for ever like his own dung:  
They which have seen him shall say, Where is he?  
He shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found:

Yea, he shall be chased away as a vision of the night.

The eye also which saw him shall see him no more;  
Neither shall his place any more behold him.

His children shall seek to please the poor,  
And his hands shall restore their goods.

His bones are full of the sin of his youth,  
Which shall lie down with him in the dust.

Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth,  
Though he hide it under his tongue;

Though he spare it, and forsake it not;  
But keep it still within his mouth:

Yet his meat in his bowels is turned,  
It is the gall of asps within him.

He hath swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit  
them up again:

God shall cast them out of his belly.

He shall suck the poison of asps:

The viper's tongue shall slay him.

He shall not see the rivers, the floods,

The brooks of honey and butter.

That which he laboured for shall he restore,

And shall not swallow it down:

According to his substance shall the restitution be,

And he shall not rejoice therein.

Because he hath oppressed and hath forsaken the  
poor;  
Because he hath violently taken away an house  
which he builded not;  
Surely he shall not feel quietness in his belly,  
He shall not save of that which he desired.  
There shall none of his meat be left;  
Therefore shall no man look for his goods.  
In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits:  
Every hand of the wicked shall come upon him.  
When he is about to fill his belly,  
God shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him,  
And shall rain it upon him while he is eating.  
He shall flee from the iron weapon,  
And the bow of steel shall strike him through.  
It is drawn, and cometh out of the body;  
Yea, the glittering sword cometh out of his gall:  
Terrors are upon him.  
All darkness shall be hid in his secret places:  
A fire not blown shall consume him;  
It shall go ill with him that is left in his tabernacle.  
The heaven shall reveal his iniquity;  
And the earth shall rise up against him.  
The increase of his house shall depart,  
And his goods shall flow away in the day of his  
wrath.  
This is the portion of a wicked man from God,  
And the heritage appointed unto him by God.

### The Sixth Answer of Job.

CH. 21

But Job answered and said,  
Hear diligently my speech,  
And let this be your consolations.  
Suffer me that I may speak;  
And after that I have spoken, mock on.  
As for me, is my complaint to man?



And if it were so, why should not my spirit be troubled?

Mark me, and be astonished,  
And lay your hand upon your mouth.  
Even when I remember I am afraid,  
And trembling taketh hold on my flesh.

Job shows  
how the  
wicked  
prosper

Wherefore do the wicked live,  
Become old, yea, are mighty in power?  
Their seed is established in their sight with them,  
And their offspring before their eyes.  
Their houses are safe from fear,  
Neither is the rod of God upon them.  
Their bull gendereth, and faileth not;  
Their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf.  
They send forth their little ones like a flock,  
And their children dance.  
They take the timbrel and harp,  
And rejoice at the sound of the organ.  
They spend their days in wealth,  
And in a moment go down to the grave.  
Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us;  
For we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.  
What is the Almighty, that we should serve him?  
And what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?

Lo, their good is not in their hand:  
The counsel of the wicked is far from me,  
How oft is the candle of the wicked put out!  
And how oft cometh their destruction upon them!  
God distributeth sorrows in his anger.  
They are as stubble before the wind,  
And as chaff that the storm carrieth away.  
God layeth up his iniquity for his children;  
He rewardeth him, and he shall know it.  
His eyes shall see his destruction,  
And he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.  
For what pleasure hath he in his house after him,



When the number of his months is cut off in the midst?

Shall any teach God knowledge?

Seeing he judgeth those that are high.

One dieth in his full strength,

Being wholly at ease and quiet.

His breasts are full of milk,

And his bones are moistened with marrow.

And another dieth in the bitterness of his soul,

And never eateth with pleasure.

They shall lie down alike in the dust,

And the worms shall cover them.

Behold, I know your thoughts,

And the devices which ye wrongfully imagine against me.

For ye say, Where is the house of the prince?

And where are the dwelling places of the wicked?

Have ye not asked them that go by the way?

And do ye not know their tokens,

That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction?

They shall be brought forth to the day of wrath.

Who shall declare his way to his face?

And who shall repay him what he hath done?

Yet shall he be brought to the grave,

And shall remain in the tomb.

The clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him,

And every man shall draw after him,

As there are innumerable before him.

How then comfort ye me in vain,

Seeing in your answers there remaineth falsehood?

### The Third Speech of Eliphaz.

CH. 22

Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said,

Can a man be profitable unto God,

As he that is wise may be profitable unto himself?

Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art  
righteous?

Or is it gain to him, that thou makest thy ways  
perfect?

Will he reprove thee for fear of thee?

Will he enter with thee into judgment?

Is not thy wickedness great?

And thine iniquities infinite?

For thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for  
nought,

And stripped the naked of their clothing.

Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink,

And thou hast withholden bread from the hungry.

But as for the mighty man, he had the earth;

And the honourable man dwelt in it.

Thou hast sent widows away empty,

And the arms of the fatherless have been broken.

Therefore snares are round about thee,

And sudden fear troubleth thee;

Or darkness, that thou canst not see;

And abundance of waters cover thee.

Is not God in the height of heaven?

And behold the height of the stars, how high they  
are!

And thou sayest, How doth God know?

Can he judge through the dark cloud?

Thick clouds are a covering to him, that he seeth not;

And he walketh in the circuit of heaven.

Hast thou marked the old way

Which wicked men have trodden?

Which were cut down out of time,

Whose foundation was overflown with a flood:

Which said unto God, Depart from us:

And what can the Almighty do for them?

Yet he filled their houses with good things:

But the counsel of the wicked is far from me.

The righteous see it, and are glad:

If Job  
repents he  
will again  
receive  
favor

And the innocent laugh them to scorn.  
Whereas our substance is not cut down,  
But the remnant of them the fire consumeth.  
Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace:  
Thereby good shall come unto thee.  
Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth,  
And lay up his words in thine heart.  
If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up,  
Thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy  
tabernacles.  
Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust,  
And the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks.  
Yea, the Almighty shall be thy defence,  
And thou shalt have plenty of silver.  
For then shalt thou have thy delight in the  
Almighty,  
And shalt lift up thy face unto God.  
Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall  
hear thee,  
And thou shalt pay thy vows.  
Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be estab-  
lished unto thee:  
And the light shall shine upon thy ways.  
When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, There  
is lifting up;  
And he shall save the humble person.  
He shall deliver the island of the innocent:  
And it is delivered by the pureness of thine hands.

### The Seventh Answer of Job.

CH. 23

Then Job answered and said,  
Even to day is my complaint bitter:  
My stroke is heavier than my groaning.  
Oh that I knew where I might find him!  
That I might come even to his seat!  
I would order my cause before him,

And fill my mouth with arguments.

I would know the words which he would answer me,

And understand what he would say unto me.

Will he plead against me with his great power?

No; but he would put strength in me.

There the righteous might dispute with him;

So should I be delivered for ever from my judge.

Behold, I go forward, but he is not there;

And backward, but I cannot perceive him:

On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot  
behold him:

He hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot  
see him:

But he knoweth the way that I take:

When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

My foot hath held his steps,

His way have I kept, and not declined.

Neither have I gone back from the commandment  
of his lips;

I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than  
my necessary food.

But he is in one mind, and who can turn him?

And what his soul desireth, even that he doeth.

For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me:

And many such things are with him.

Therefore am I troubled at his presence:

When I consider, I am afraid of him.

For God maketh my heart soft,

And the Almighty troubleth me:

Because I was not cut off before the darkness,

Neither hath he covered the darkness from my face.

CH. 24

Why, seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty,

Do they that know him not see his days?

Some remove the landmarks;

They violently take away flocks, and feed thereof.

They drive away the ass of the fatherless,

They take the widow's ox for a pledge.

They turn the needy out of the way:  
The poor of the earth hide themselves together.  
Behold, as wild asses in the desert,  
Go they forth to their work; rising betimes for a  
prey:  
The wilderness yieldeth food for them and for their  
children.  
They reap every one his corn in the field:  
And they gather the vintage of the wicked.  
They cause the naked to lodge without clothing,  
That they have no covering in the cold.  
They are wet with the showers of the mountains,  
And embrace the rock for want of a shelter.  
They pluck the fatherless from the breast,  
And take a pledge of the poor.  
They cause him to go naked without clothing,  
And they take away the sheaf from the hungry;  
Which make oil within their walls,  
And tread their winepresses, and suffer thirst.  
Men groan from out of the city,  
And the soul of the wounded crieth out:  
Yet God layeth not folly to them.  
They are of those that rebel against the light;  
They know not the ways thereof,  
Nor abide in the paths thereof.  
The murderer rising with the light killeth the poor  
and needy,  
And in the night is as a thief.  
The eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight,  
Saying, No eye shall see me:  
And disguiseth his face.  
In the dark they dig through houses,  
Which they had marked for themselves in the day  
time:  
They know not the light.  
For the morning is to them even as the shadow of  
death:

If one know them, they are in the terrors of the shadow of death.

He is swift as the waters;

Their portion is cursed in the earth:

He beholdeth not the way of the vineyards.

Drought and heat consume the snow waters:

So doth the grave those which have sinned.

Job reiter-  
ates that  
the good  
suffer and  
the wicked  
prosper

The womb shall forget him; the worm shall feed sweetly on him;

He shall be no more remembered;

And wickedness shall be broken as a tree.

He evil entreateth the barren that beareth not:

And doeth not good to the widow.

He draweth also the mighty with his power:

He riseth up, and no man is sure of life.

Though it be given him to be in safety, whereon he resteth;

Yet his eyes are upon their ways.

They are exalted for a little while, but are gone and brought low;

They are taken out of the way as all other,

And cut off as the tops of the ears of corn.

And if it be not so now, who will make me a liar,

And make my speech nothing worth?

### The Third Speech of Bildad.<sup>4</sup>

CH. 25  
CH. 26  
(5-14)

Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,

Dominion and fear are with him,

He maketh peace in his high places.

Is there any number of his armies?

And upon whom doth not his light arise?

How then can man be justified with God?

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<sup>4</sup>The third speech of Bildad, the eighth answer of Job, the third speech of Zophar, and the final answer of Job have been rearranged according to the restoration suggested by Professor Jastrow in *The Book of Job* (Lippincott, 1920).

Bildad  
again  
asserts the  
might of  
God

Or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?  
Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not;  
Yea, the stars are not pure in his sight.  
How much less man, that is a worm?  
And the son of man, which is a worm?  
Dead things are formed from under the waters,  
And the inhabitants thereof.  
Hell is naked before him,  
And destruction hath no covering.  
He stretcheth out the north over the empty place,  
And hangeth the earth upon nothing.  
He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds;  
And the cloud is not rent under them.  
He holdeth back the face of his throne,  
And spreadeth his cloud upon it.  
He hath compassed the waters with bounds,  
Until the day and night come to an end.  
The pillars of heaven tremble  
And are astonished at his reproof.  
He divideth the sea with his power,  
And by his understanding he smiteth through the  
proud.  
By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens;  
His hand hath formed the crooked serpent.  
Lo, these are parts of his ways:  
But how little a portion is heard of him?  
But the thunder of his power who can understand?

### The Eighth Answer of Job.

CH. 26  
(1-4)  
CH. 27  
(2-6)  
CH. 30  
(16-24)  
CH. 31  
(35-37)

But Job answered and said,  
How hast thou helped him that is without power?  
How savest thou the arm that hath no strength?  
How hast thou counselled him that hath no wisdom?  
And how hast thou plentifully declared the thing as  
it is?  
To whom hast thou uttered words?



Job  
remains  
firm

And whose spirit came from thee?  
As God liveth, who hath taken away my judgment;  
And the Almighty, who hath vexed my soul:  
All the while my breath is in me,  
And the spirit of God is in my nostrils;  
My lips shall not speak wickedness,  
Nor my tongue utter deceit.  
God forbid that I should justify you:  
Till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me.  
My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go:  
My heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.  
And now my soul is poured out upon me;  
The days of affliction have taken hold upon me.  
My bones are pierced in me in the night season:  
And my sinews take no rest.  
By the great force of my disease is my garment  
changed:  
It bindeth me about as the collar of my coat.  
He hath cast me into the mire,  
And I am become like dust and ashes.  
I cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me;  
I stand up, and thou regardest me not.  
Thou art become cruel to me:  
With thy strong hand thou opposest thyself against  
me.  
Thou liftest me up to the wind;  
Thou causest me to ride upon it,  
And dissolvest my substance.  
For I know that thou wilt bring me to death,  
And to the house appointed for all living,  
Howbeit he will not stretch out his hand to the  
grave,  
Though they cry in his destruction.  
Oh that one would hear me!  
Behold, my desire is, that the Almighty would  
answer me,  
And that mine adversary had written a book.

Surely I would take it upon my shoulder,  
 And bind it as a crown to me.  
 I would declare unto him the number of my steps;  
 As a prince would I go near unto him.

### The Third Speech of Zophar.

CH. 31  
 (2-4)  
 CH. 27  
 (7-23)  
 CH. 30  
 (2-8)

Again "the  
 wicked  
 perish"

[Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,]  
 For what portion of God is there from above?  
 And what inheritance of the Almighty from on high?  
 Is not destruction to the wicked?  
 And a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity?  
 Doth not he see my ways,  
 And count all my steps?  
 Let mine enemy be as the wicked,  
 And he that riseth up against me as the unrighteous.  
 For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath  
     gained,  
 When God taketh away his soul?  
 Will God hear his cry  
 When trouble cometh upon him?  
 Will he delight himself in the Almighty?  
 Will he always call upon God?  
 I will teach you by the hand of God:  
 That which is with the Almighty will I not conceal.  
 Behold, all ye yourselves have seen it;  
 Why then are ye thus altogether vain?  
 This is the portion of a wicked man with God,  
 And the heritage of oppressors, which they shall  
     receive of the Almighty.  
 If his children be multiplied, it is for the sword:  
 And his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread.  
 Those that remain of him shall be buried in death:  
 And his widows shall not weep.  
 Though he heap up silver as the dust,  
 And prepare raiment as the clay;  
 He may prepare it, but the just shall put it on,

And the innocent shall divide the silver.  
 He buildeth his house as a moth,  
 And as a booth that the keeper maketh.  
 The rich man shall lie down, but he shall not be  
     gathered:  
 He openeth his eyes, and he is not.  
 Terrors take hold on him as waters,  
 A tempest stealeth him away in the night.  
 The east wind carrieth him away, and he departeth:  
 And as a storm hurleth him out of his place.  
 For God shall cast upon him, and not spare:  
 He would fain flee out of his hand.  
 Men shall clap their hands at him,  
 And shall hiss him out of his place.  
 Yea, whereto might the strength of their hands profit  
     me,  
 In whom old age was perished.  
 For want and famine they were solitary;  
 Fleeing into the wilderness in former time desolate  
     and waste.  
 Who cut up mallows by the bushes,  
 And juniper roots for their meat.  
 They were driven forth from among men,  
 (They cried after them as after a thief;)  
 To dwell in the cliffs of the valleys,  
 In caves of the earth, and in the rocks.  
 Among the bushes they brayed;  
 Under the nettles they were gathered together.  
 They were children of fools, yea, children of base  
     men:  
 They were viler than the earth.

### The Final Answer of Job.

CH. 29  
 CH. 30 (1)  
 (9-15)  
 (26-31)

Moreover Job continued his parable, and said,  
 Oh that I were as in months past,  
 As in the days when God preserved me;

CH. 31 (1) When his candle shined upon my head,  
 (9-12) And when by his light I walked through darkness;  
 (38-40) As I was in the days of my youth, when the secret  
 (13-15) of God was upon my tabernacle;  
 CH. 30 When the Almighty was yet with me,  
 (25) When my children were about me;  
 CH. 31 When I washed my steps with butter,  
 (16-34) And the rock poured me out rivers of oil;  
 CH. 32 (1) When I went out to the gate through the city,  
 When I prepared my seat in the street!  
 The young men saw me, and hid themselves:  
 And the aged arose, and stood up.  
 The princes refrained talking,  
 And laid their hand on their mouth.  
 The nobles held their peace,  
 And their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth.  
 When the ear heard me, then it blessed me;  
 And when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me;  
 Because I delivered the poor that cried,  
 And the fatherless, and him that had none to help  
 him.  
 The blessing of him that was ready to perish came  
 upon me:  
 And I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.  
 I put on righteousness, and it clothed me:  
 My judgment was as a robe and a diadem.  
 I was eyes to the blind,  
 And feet was I to the lame.  
 I was a father to the poor:  
 And the cause which I knew not I searched out.  
 And I brake the jaws of the wicked,  
 And plucked the spoil out of his teeth.  
 Then I said, I shall die in my nest,  
 And I shall multiply my days as the sand.  
 My root was spread out by the waters,  
 And the dew lay all night upon my branch.  
 My glory was fresh in me,

And my bow was renewed in my hand.  
Unto me men gave ear, and waited,  
And kept silence at my counsel.  
After my words they spake not again;  
And my speech dropped upon them.  
And they waited for me as for the rain;  
And they opened their mouth wide as for the latter  
rain.

If I laughed on them, they believed it not;  
And the light of my countenance they cast not down.  
I chose out their way, and sat chief,  
And dwelt as a king in the army,  
As one that comforteth the mourners.  
But now they that are younger than I have me in  
derision,

Whose fathers I would have disdained to have set  
with the dogs of my flock.

And now am I their song,  
Yea, I am their byword.

They abhor me, they flee far from me,  
And spare not to spit in my face.

Because he hath loosed my cord, and afflicted me,  
They have also let loose the bridle before me.

Upon my right hand rise the youth;

They push away my feet,

And they raise up against me the ways of their  
destruction.

They mar my path,

They set forward my calamity,

They have no helper.

They came upon me as a wide breaking in of waters:

In the desolation they rolled themselves upon me.

Terrors are turned upon me,

They pursue my soul as the wind:

And my welfare passeth away as a cloud.

When I looked for good, then evil came unto me:

And when I waited for light, there came darkness.

My bowels boiled, and rested not:  
The days of affliction prevented me.  
I went mourning without the sun:  
I stood up, and I cried in the congregation.  
I am a brother to dragons,  
And a companion to owls.  
My skin is black upon me,  
And my bones are burned with heat.  
My harp also is turned to mourning,  
And my organ into the voice of them that weep.  
I made a covenant with mine eyes;  
Why then should I think upon a maid?  
If mine heart have been deceived by a woman,  
Or if I have laid wait at my neighbour's door;  
Then let my wife grind unto another,  
And let others bow down upon her.  
For this is an heinous crime;  
Yea, it is an iniquity to be punished by the judges.  
For it is a fire that consumeth to destruction,  
And would root out all mine increase.  
If my land cry against me,  
Or that the furrows likewise thereof complain;  
If I have eaten the fruits thereof without money,  
Or have caused the owners thereof to lose their life;  
Let thistles grow instead of wheat,  
And cockle instead of barley.  
If I did despise the cause of my manservant or of  
my maidservant,  
When they contended with me;  
What then shall I do when God riseth up?  
And when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?  
Did not he that made me in the womb make him?  
And did not one fashion us in the womb?  
Did not I weep for him that was in trouble?  
Was not my soul grieved for the poor?  
If I have withheld the poor from their desire,  
Or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail;

Job lists  
his virtues,  
and his  
avoidances  
of sin

Or have eaten my morsel myself alone,  
And the fatherless hath not eaten thereof;  
(For from my youth he was brought up with me, as  
    with a father,  
And I have guided her from my mother's womb;)   
If I have seen any perish for want of clothing,  
Or any poor without covering;  
If his loins have not blessed me,  
And if he were not warmed with the fleece of my  
    sheep;  
If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless,  
When I saw my help in the gate:  
Then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade,  
And mine arm be broken from the bone.  
For destruction from God was a terror to me,  
And by reason of his highness I could not endure.  
If I have made gold my hope,  
Or have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence;  
If I rejoiced because my wealth was great,  
And because mine hand had gotten much;  
If I beheld the sun when it shined,  
Or the moon walking in brightness;  
And my heart hath been secretly enticed,  
Or my mouth hath kissed my hand;  
This also were an iniquity to be punished by the  
    judge:  
For I should have denied the God that is above.  
If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me,  
Or lifted up myself when evil found him:  
Neither have I suffered my mouth to sin  
By wishing a curse to his soul.  
If the men of my tabernacle said not,  
Oh that we had of his flesh!  
We cannot be satisfied.  
The stranger did not lodge in the street:  
But I opened my doors to the traveller.



If I covered my transgressions as Adam,  
By hiding my iniquity in my bosom:  
Did I fear a great multitude,  
Or did the contempt of families terrify me,  
That I kept silence, and went not out of the door?  
If I have walked with vanity,  
Of if my foot hath hasted to deceit;  
Let me be weighed in an even balance,  
That God may know mine integrity.  
If my step hath turned out of the way,  
And mine heart walked after mine eyes,  
And if any blot hath cleaved to mine hands;  
Then let me sow, and let another eat;  
Yea, let my offspring be rooted out.

The words of Job are ended.

So these three men ceased to answer Job, because  
he was righteous in his own eyes.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>The original texts read: "righteous in *their* eyes," meaning that Job had convinced his opponents, who had no more to say (Jastrow, p. 314).

## The Search for Wisdom.

### AN INDEPENDENT POEM

CH. 28

Surely there is a vein for the silver,  
And a place for gold where they fine it.  
Iron is taken out of the earth,  
And brass is molten out of the stone.  
He setteth an end to darkness,  
And searcheth out all perfection:  
The stones of darkness, and the shadow of death.  
The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant;  
Even the waters forgotten of the foot:  
They are dried up, they are gone away from men.  
As for the earth, out of it cometh bread:  
And under it is turned up as it were fire.  
The stones of it are the place of sapphires;  
And it hath dust of gold.  
There is a path which no fowl knoweth,  
And which the vulture's eye hath not seen:  
The lion's whelps have not trodden it,  
Nor the fierce lion passed by it.  
He putteth forth his hand upon the rock;  
He overturneth the mountains by the roots.  
He cutteth out rivers among the rocks;  
And his eye seeth every precious thing.  
He bindeth the floods from overflowing;  
And the thing that is hid bringeth he forth to light.  
But where shall wisdom be found?  
And where is the place of understanding?  
Man knoweth not the price thereof;  
Neither is it found in the land of the living.

The depth saith, It is not in me:  
And the sea saith, It is not with me.  
It cannot be gotten for gold,  
Neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof.  
It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir,  
With the precious onyx, or the sapphire.  
The gold and the crystal cannot equal it:  
And the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine  
gold.

No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls:  
For the price of wisdom is above rubies.  
The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it,  
Neither shall it be valued with pure gold.  
Whence then cometh wisdom?  
And where is the place of understanding?  
Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living,  
And kept close from the fowls of the air.  
Destruction and death say,  
We have heard the fame thereof with our ears.  
God understandeth the way thereof,  
And he knoweth the place thereof.  
For he looketh to the ends of the earth,  
And seeth under the whole heaven;  
To make the weight for the winds;  
And he weigheth the waters by measure.  
When he made a decree for the rain,  
And a way for the lightning of the thunder;  
Then did he see it, and declare it;  
He prepared it, yea, and searched it out.  
And unto man he said,  
Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom;  
And to depart from evil is understanding.

## The Additions.

### The First Speech of Elihu.

CH. 32  
(2-22)

Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram: against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself rather than God. Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job. Now Elihu had waited till Job had spoken, because they were elder than he. When Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, then his wrath was kindled.

And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said,

I am young, and ye are very old;  
Wherefore I was afraid, and durst not shew you mine opinion.

I said, Days should speak,  
And multitude of years should teach wisdom.  
But there is a spirit in man:  
And the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.

Great men are not always wise;  
Neither do the aged understand judgment.  
Therefore I said, Hearken to me;  
I also will shew mine opinion.  
Behold, I waited for your words;  
I gave ear to your reasons,  
Whilst ye searched out what to say.  
Yea, I attended unto you,

And, behold, there was none of you that convinced  
Job,

Or that answered his words:

Lest ye should say, We have found out wisdom:

God thrusteth him down, not man.

Now he hath not directed his words against me:

Neither will I answer him with your speeches.

They were amazed, they answered no more:

They left off speaking.

When I had waited, (for they spake not,

But stood still, and answered no more:)

I said, I will answer also my part,

I also will shew mine opinion.

For I am full of matter,

The spirit within me constraineth me.

Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent;

It is ready to burst like new bottles.

I will speak, that I may be refreshed:

I will open my lips and answer.

Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person,

Neither let me give flattering titles unto man.

For I know not to give flattering titles;

In so doing my maker would soon take me away.

Wherefore, Job, I pray thee, hear my speeches,

And hearken to all my words.

Behold, now I have opened my mouth,

My tongue hath spoken in my mouth.

My words shall be of the uprightness of my heart:

And my lips shall utter knowledge clearly.

The spirit of God hath made me,

And the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.

If thou canst answer me,

Set thy words in order before me, stand up.

Behold, I am according to thy wish in God's stead:

I also am formed out of the clay.

Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid,

Neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee.

Surely thou hast spoken in mine hearing,  
And I have heard the voice of thy words, saying,  
I am clean without transgression,  
I am innocent; neither is there iniquity in me.  
Behold, he findeth occasions against me,  
He counteth me for his enemy.  
He putteth my feet in the stocks,  
He marketh all my paths.  
Behold, in this thou art not just:  
I will answer thee, that God is greater than man.  
Why dost thou strive against him?  
For he giveth not account of any of his matters.  
For God speaketh once,  
Yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not.  
In a dream, in a vision of the night,  
When deep sleep falleth upon men,  
In slumberings upon the bed;  
Then he openeth the ears of men,  
And sealeth their instruction,  
That he may withdraw man from his purpose,  
And hide pride from man.  
He keepeth back his soul from the pit,  
And his life from perishing by the sword.  
He is chastened also with pain upon his bed,  
And the multitude of his bones with strong pain:  
So that his life abhorreth bread,  
And his soul dainty meat.  
His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen;  
And his bones that were not seen stick out.  
Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave,  
And his life to the destroyers.  
If there be a messenger with him,  
An interpreter, one among a thousand,  
To shew unto man his uprightness:  
Then he is gracious unto him, and saith,  
Deliver him from going down to the pit:  
I have found a ransom.

His flesh shall be fresher than a child's:  
He shall return to the days of his youth:  
He shall pray unto God, and he will be favorable  
unto him:  
And he shall see his face with joy:  
For he will render unto man his righteousness.  
He looketh upon men, and if any say,  
I have sinned, and perverted that which was right,  
And it profited me not;  
He will deliver his soul from going into the pit,  
And his life shall see the light.  
Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with  
man,  
To bring back his soul from the pit,  
To be enlightened with the light of the living.  
Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me:  
Hold thy peace, and I will speak.  
If thou hast any thing to say, answer me:  
Speak, for I desire to justify thee.  
If not, hearken unto me:  
Hold thy peace, and I shall teach thee wisdom.

### The Second Speech of Elihu.

CH. 34      Furthermore Elihu answered and said,  
Hear my words, O ye wise men;  
And give ear unto me, ye that have knowledge.  
For the ear trieth words,  
As the mouth tasteth meat.  
Let us choose to us judgment:  
Let us know among ourselves what is good.  
For Job hath said, I am righteous:  
And God hath taken away my judgment.  
Should I lie against my right?  
My wound is incurable without transgression.  
What man is like Job,  
Who drinketh up scorning like water?



Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity,

And walketh with wicked men.

For he hath said, It profiteth a man nothing that he should delight himself with God.

Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of understanding:

Far be it from God, that he should do wickedness;  
And from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity.

For the work of a man shall he render unto him,  
And cause every man to find according to his ways.

Yea, surely God will not do wickedly,

Neither will the Almighty pervert judgment.

Who hath given him a charge over the earth?

Or who hath disposed the whole world?

If he set his heart upon man,

If he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath;

All flesh shall perish together,

And man shall turn again unto dust.

If now thou hast understanding, hear this:

Hearken to the voice of my words.

Shall even he that hateth right govern?

And wilt thou condemn him that is most just?

Is it fit to say to a king, Thou art wicked?

And to princes, Ye are ungodly?

How much less to him that accepteth not the persons of princes,

Nor regardeth the rich more than the poor?

For they all are the work of his hands.

In a moment shall they die,

And the people shall be troubled at midnight, and pass away:

And the mighty shall be taken away without hand.

For his eyes are upon the ways of man,

And he seeth all his goings.

There is no darkness, nor shadow of death,

Where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.  
For he will not lay upon man more than right;  
That he should enter into judgment with God.  
He shall break in pieces mighty men without number,  
And set others in their stead.

Therefore he knoweth their works,  
And he overturneth them in the night, so that they  
are destroyed.

He striketh them as wicked men in the open sight of  
others;

Because they turned back from him,  
And would not consider any of his ways:  
So that they cause the cry of the poor to come unto  
him,

And he heareth the cry of the afflicted.  
When he giveth quietness, who then can make  
trouble?

And when he hideth his face, who then can behold  
him?

Whether it be done against a nation, or against a  
man only:

That the hypocrite reign not,  
Lest the people be ensnared.  
Surely it is meet to be said unto God,  
I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any  
more:

That which I see not teach thou me:  
If I have done iniquity, I will do no more.  
Should it be according to thy mind?  
He will recompense it, whether thou refuse,  
Or whether thou choose; and not I;  
Therefore speak what thou knowest.  
Let men of understanding tell me,  
And let a wise man hearken unto me.  
Job hath spoken without knowledge,  
And his words were without wisdom.  
My desire is that Job may be tried unto the end,

Because of his answers for wicked men.  
For he addeth rebellion unto his sin,  
He clappeth his hands among us,  
And multiplieth his words against God.

### The Third Speech of Elihu.

CH. 35

Elihu spake moreover, and said,  
Thinkest thou this to be right,  
That thou saidst, My righteousness is more than  
God's?  
For thou saidst, What advantage will it be unto  
thee?  
And, What profit shall I have, if I be cleansed from  
my sin?  
I will answer thee,  
And thy companions with thee.  
Look unto the heavens, and see;  
And behold the clouds which are higher than thou.  
If thou sinnest, what doest thou against him?  
Or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest  
thou unto him?  
If thou be righteous, what givest thou him?  
Or what receiveth he of thine hand?  
Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art;  
And thy righteousness may profit the son of man.  
By reason of the multitude of oppressions they make  
the oppressed to cry:  
They cry out by reason of the arm of the mighty.  
But none saith, Where is God my maker,  
Who giveth songs in the night;  
Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth,  
And maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven?  
There they cry, but none giveth answer,  
Because of the pride of evil men.  
Surely God will not hear vanity,  
Neither will the Almighty regard it.

Although thou sayest thou shalt not see him,  
Yet judgment is before him; therefore trust thou  
in him.

But now, because it is not so, he hath visited in his  
anger;

Yet he knoweth it not in great extremity:  
Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vain;  
He multiplieth words without knowledge.

### The Fourth Speech of Elihu.

CH. 36

Elihu also proceeded, and said,  
Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee,  
That I have yet to speak on God's behalf.  
I will fetch my knowledge from afar,  
And will ascribe righteousness to my Maker.  
For truly my words shall not be false:  
He that is perfect in knowledge is with thee.  
Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any:  
He is mighty in strength and wisdom.  
He preserveth not the life of the wicked:  
But giveth right to the poor.  
He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous:  
But with kings are they on the throne;  
Yea, he doth establish them for ever, and they are  
exalted.

And if they be bound in fetters,  
And be holden in cords of affliction;  
Then he sheweth them their work,  
And their transgressions that they have exceeded.  
He openeth also their ear to discipline,  
And commandeth that they return from iniquity.  
If they obey and serve him,  
They shall spend their days in prosperity,  
And their years in pleasures.  
But if they obey not, they shall perish by the sword,  
And they shall die without knowledge.

But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath:  
They cry not when he bindeth them.  
They die in youth,  
And their life is among the unclean.  
He delivereth the poor in his affliction,  
And openeth their ears in oppression.  
Even so would he have removed thee out of the strait  
Into a broad place, where there is no straitness;  
And that which should be set on thy table should  
be full of fatness.  
But thou hast fulfilled the judgment of the wicked:  
Judgment and justice take hold on thee.  
Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away  
with his stroke:  
Then a great ransom cannot deliver thee.  
Will he esteem thy riches? no, not gold,  
Nor all the forces of strength.  
Desire not the night,  
When people are cut off in their place.  
Take heed, regard not iniquity;  
For this hast thou chosen rather than affliction.  
Behold, God exalteth by his power:  
Who teacheth like him?  
Who hath enjoined him his way?  
Or who can say, Thou hast wrought iniquity?  
Remember that thou magnify his work,  
Which men behold.  
Every man may see it;  
Man may behold it afar off.  
Behold, God is great, and we know him not,  
Neither can the number of his years be searched out.  
For he maketh small the drops of water:  
They pour down rain according to the vapour  
thereof:  
Which the clouds do drop  
And distil upon man abundantly.  
Also can any understand the spreadings of the clouds,

Or the noise of his tabernacle?  
Behold, he spreadeth his light upon it;  
And covereth the bottom of the sea.  
For by them judgeth he the people;  
He giveth meat in abundance.  
With clouds he covereth the light;  
And commandeth it not to shine by the cloud that  
cometh betwixt.

CH. 37

The noise thereof sheweth concerning it,  
The cattle also concerning the vapour.  
At this also my heart trembleth,  
And is moved out of his place.  
Hear attentively the noise of his voice,  
And the sound that goeth out of his mouth.  
He directeth it under the whole heaven,  
And his lightning unto the ends of the earth.  
After it a voice roareth:  
He thundereth with the voice of his excellency;  
And he will not stay them when his voice is heard.  
God thundereth marvellously with his voice;  
Great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend.  
For he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth;  
Likewise to the small rain,  
And to the great rain of his strength.  
He sealeth up the hand of every man;  
That all men may know his work.  
Then the beasts go into dens,  
And remain in their places.  
Out of the south cometh the whirlwind:  
And cold out of the north.  
By the breath of God frost is given:  
And the breadth of the waters is straitened.  
Also by watering he wearieth the thick cloud:  
He scattereth his bright cloud:  
And it is turned round about by his counsels:  
That they may do whatsoever he commandeth them  
Upon the face of the world in the earth.

He causeth it to come, whether for correction,  
Or for his land, or for mercy.  
Hearken unto this, O Job:  
Stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God.  
Dost thou know when God disposed them,  
And caused the light of his cloud to shine?  
Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds,  
The wondrous works of him which is perfect in  
knowledge?  
How thy garments are warm,  
When he quieteth the earth by the south wind?  
Hast thou with him spread out the sky,  
Which is strong, and as a molten looking glass?  
Teach us what we shall say unto him;  
For we cannot order our speech by reason of  
darkness.  
Shall it be told him that I speak?  
If a man speak, surely he shall be swallowed up.  
And now men see not the bright light which is in  
the clouds:  
But the wind passeth, and cleanseth them.  
Fair weather cometh out of the north:  
With God is terrible majesty.  
Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he  
is excellent in power,  
And in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will  
not afflict.  
Men do therefore fear him:  
He respecteth not any that are wise of heart.

The Voice of the Lord in the Whirlwind.

CH. 38

Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind,  
and said,  
Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without  
knowledge?  
Gird up now thy loins like a man;



For I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.  
Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the  
earth?

Declare, if thou hast understanding.  
Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou know-  
est?

Or who hath stretched the line upon it?  
Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened?  
Or who laid the corner stone thereof;  
When the morning stars sang together,  
And all the sons of God shouted for joy?  
Or who shut up the sea with doors,  
When it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the  
womb?

When I made the cloud the garment thereof,  
And thick darkness a swaddling-band for it,  
And brake up for it my decreed place,  
And set bars and doors,  
And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further:  
And here shall thy proud waves be stayed?  
Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days;  
And caused the dayspring to know his place;  
That it might take hold of the ends of the earth,  
That the wicked might be shaken out of it?  
It is turned as clay to the seal;  
And they stand as a garment.

And from the wicked their light is withholden,  
And the high arm shall be broken.  
Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea?  
Or hast thou walked in the search of the depth?  
Have the gates of death been opened unto thee?  
Or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?  
Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth?  
Declare if thou knowest it all.

Where is the way where light dwelleth?  
And as for darkness, where is the place thereof?  
That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof,

And that thou shouldest know the paths to the house thereof?

Knowest thou it, because thou wast then born?

Or because the number of thy days is great?

Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?

Or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail,

Which I have reserved against the time of trouble,

Against the day of battle and war?

By what way is the light parted,

Which scattereth the east wind upon the earth?

Who hath divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters,

Or a way for the lightning of thunder;

To cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is;

On the wilderness, wherein there is no man;

To satisfy the desolate and waste ground;

And to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?

Hath the rain a father?

Or who hath begotten the drops of dew?

Out of whose womb came the ice?

And the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it?

The waters are hid as with a stone,

And the face of the deep is frozen.

Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades,

Or loose the bands of Orion?

Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season?

Or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?

Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven?

Canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?

Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds,

That abundance of waters may cover thee?

Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go,

And say unto thee, Here we are?

Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts?

Or who hath given understanding to the heart?

Who can number the clouds in wisdom?  
Or who can stay the bottles of heaven,  
When the dust groweth into hardness,  
And the clods cleave fast together?  
Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lion?  
Or fill the appetite of the young lions,  
When they couch in their dens,  
And abide in the covert to lie in wait?  
Who provideth for the raven his food?  
When his young ones cry unto God,  
They wander for lack of meat.

CH. 39

Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the  
rock bring forth?

Or canst thou mark when the hinds do calve?  
Canst thou number the months that they fulfil?  
Or knowest thou the time when they bring forth?  
They bow themselves, they bring forth their young  
ones,

They cast out their sorrows.

Their young ones are in good liking, they grow up  
with corn;

They go forth, and return not unto them.

Who hath sent out the wild ass free?

Or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?

Whose house I have made the wilderness,  
And the barren land his dwellings.

He scorneth the multitude of the city,

Neither regardeth he the crying of the driver.

The range of the mountains is his pasture,

And he searcheth after every green thing.

Will the unicorn be willing to serve thee,

Or abide by the crib?

Canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the  
furrow?

Or will he harrow the valleys after thee?

Wilt thou trust him, because his strength is great?

Or wilt thou leave thy labour to him?

Wilt thou believe him, that he will bring home thy  
seed,  
And gather it into thy barn?  
Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the peacocks?  
Or wings and feathers unto the ostrich?  
Which leaveth her eggs in the earth,  
And warmeth them in the dust,  
And forgetteth that the foot may crush them,  
Or that the wild beast may break them.  
She is hardened against her young ones, as though  
they were not hers:  
Her labour is in vain without fear;  
Because God hath deprived her of wisdom,  
Neither hath he imparted to her understanding.  
What time she lifteth up herself on high,  
She scorneth the horse and his rider.  
Hast thou given the horse strength?  
Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?  
Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper?  
The glory of his nostrils is terrible.  
He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his  
strength:  
He goeth on to meet the armed men.  
He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted,  
Neither turneth he back from the sword.  
The quiver rattleth against him,  
The glittering spear and the shield.  
He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage;  
Neither believeth he that it is the sound of the  
trumpet.  
He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha;  
And he smelleth the battle afar off,  
The thunder of the captains, and the shouting.  
Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom,  
And stretch her wings toward the south?  
Doth the eagle mount up at thy command,  
And make her nest on high?

She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag  
of the rock,

And the strong place.

From thence she seeketh the prey,

And her eyes behold afar off.

Her young ones also suck up blood:

And where the slain are, there is she.

Behold now behemoth, which I made with thee;

He eateth grass as an ox.

Lo now, his strength is in his loins,

And his force is in the navel of his belly.

He moveth his tail like a cedar:

The sinews of his stones are wrapped together.

His bones are as strong pieces of brass;

His bones are like bars of iron.

He is the chief of the ways of God:

He that made him can make his sword to approach  
unto him.

Surely the mountains bring him forth food,

Where all the beasts of the field play.

He lieth under the shady trees,

In the covert of the reed, and fens.

The shady trees cover him with their shadow;

The willows of the brook compass him about.

Behold, he drinketh up a river, and hasteth not:

He trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his  
mouth.

He taketh it with his eyes:

His nose pierceth through snares.

Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook?

Or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down?

Canst thou put an hook into his nose?

Or bore his jaw through with a thorn?

Will he make many supplications unto thee?

Will he speak soft words unto thee?

Will he make a covenant with thee?

Wilt thou take him for a servant for ever?

CH. 40  
(15-24)

The  
Crocodile

CH. 41

Wilt thou play with him as with a bird?  
Or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?  
Shall the companions make a banquet of him?  
Shall they part him among the merchants?  
Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons?  
Or his head with fish spears?  
Lay thine hand upon him,  
Remember the battle, do no more.  
Behold, the hope of him is in vain:  
Shall not one be cast down even at the sight of him?  
None is so fierce that dare stir him up:  
Who then is able to stand before me?  
Who hath prevented me, that I should repay him?  
Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine.  
I will not conceal his parts,  
Nor his power, nor his comely proportion.  
Who can discover the face of his garment?  
Or who can come to him with his double bridle?  
Who can open the doors of his face?  
His teeth are terrible round about.  
His scales are his pride,  
Shut up together as with a close seal.  
One is so near to another,  
That no air can come between them.  
They are joined one to another,  
They stick together, that they cannot be sundered.  
By his neesings a light doth shine,  
And his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning.  
Out of his mouth go burning lamps,  
And sparks of fire leap out.  
Out of his nostrils goeth smoke,  
As out of a seething pot or caldron.  
His breath kindleth coals,  
And a flame goeth out of his mouth.  
In his neck remaineth strength,  
And sorrow is turned into joy before him.  
The flakes of his flesh are joined together:

They are firm in themselves, they cannot be moved.  
His heart is as firm as a stone;  
Yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone.  
When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid:  
By reason of breakings they purify themselves.  
The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold:  
The spear, the dart, nor the habergeon.  
He esteemeth iron as straw,  
And brass as rotten wood.  
The arrow cannot make him flee:  
Slingstones are turned with him into stubble.  
Darts are counted as stubble:  
He laugheth at the shaking of a spear.  
Sharp stones are under him:  
He spreadeth sharp pointed things upon the mire.  
He maketh the deep to boil like a pot:  
He maketh the sea like a pot of ointment.  
He maketh a path to shine after him;  
One would think the deep to be hoary.  
Upon the earth there is not his like,  
Who is made without fear.  
He beholdeth all high things:  
He is a king over all the children of pride.



## Epilogue to the Additions.

### The Repentance of Job.

CH. 40  
(1-5)  
CH. 42  
(2-6)

Moreover the Lord answered Job, and said,  
Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct  
him?

He that reproveth God, let him answer it.

Then Job answered the Lord, and said,  
Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee?  
I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.

Once have I spoken; but I will not answer:

Yea, twice; but I will proceed no further.

I know that thou canst do every thing,

And that no thought can be withholden from thee.

Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge?

Therefore have I uttered that I understood not;

Things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.

Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak:

I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear:

But now mine eye seeth thee.

Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent

In dust and ashes.

### Epilogue to the Symposium.

CH. 42  
(7-9)

And it was so, that after the Lord had spoken  
these words unto Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the  
Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and  
against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of  
me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath.

Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job. So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the Lord commanded them: the Lord also accepted Job.

### Conclusion of the Folk Tale.

CH. 42  
(10-17)

And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold. So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters. And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Kerenhappuch. And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren. After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his son's sons, even four generations. So Job died, being old and full of days.



# PROMETHEUS BOUND

BY

AESCHYLUS

525-456 B.C.

(Translated by E. H. Plumptre, D.D.)



## INTRODUCTION

Aeschylus, the most powerful of the Greek tragedians, has created in Prometheus a character whose glorification of protest against the arbitrary power of Zeus bears many resemblances to the attitude of Job as he is depicted in the Symposium. Both are dealing with the same problem, man's relation to the universe, and both are equally daring in challenging the traditional conception of the ruling Deity, and in maintaining their ways before his face. Job in all his sufferings, however, never questions the existence of an omnipotent and wise God, but is perplexed on this account to explain the suffering of the innocent, and the manifold injustices of the world. Prometheus, on the other hand, rebels against a god whom he considers tyrannical and cruel to mankind; and he has full knowledge that his sufferings are punishments for his defiance of Zeus on their behalf. According to the view of the orthodox Hebrew, man's suffering is the result of wilful sin; according to the Greek suffering is a penalty for resisting the Gods.

In the war between the Titans and the Olympian Gods of the new order, Prometheus, though one of the Titans, had at first supported Zeus. After hurling the Titans into the lowest depths of Tartarus, Zeus decided to destroy the race of men. Prometheus, thereupon, came forward as the champion of mankind, and stealing from Hephaestos the divine fire (wisdom), out of which Hephaestos fashioned the thunderbolts with which Zeus maintained his tyranny, gave it to the race of men. For this deed Zeus chained Prometheus to a crag in the Caucasus, and inflicted upon him endless tortures in the hope of extracting from him finally an important secret, known only to Prometheus (Forethought). This secret was the sure knowledge that some day would arise a vindicator, from Zeus' own descendants, who would overthrow the cruel tyrant.

In addition to the comfort of this secret, Prometheus reveals in the play other solaces for his sufferings. He knows that as a Titan he is immortal and will live to witness the day of Zeus' downfall; he knows that Zeus himself cannot escape the resistless might of Necessity, represented by the three Fates, whom no one can escape. Zeus himself in the play is conceived as limited in power and wisdom. Moreover, Prometheus has as comforters, the Ocean Nymphs, Oceanos, and even Hephaestos. They think him rash, however, to boast of his secret and to exult in his defiance. Like the Comforters of Job, Oceanos urges him to contend no longer in lofty speech with Zeus, for such insolence of Pride was, in the eyes of the Greeks, a mortal offense, certain to be punished. Prometheus, however, points with satisfaction to the civilizing influences of his gift of fire upon the race of men, and vows never to relent, nor to reveal his secret.

Io, a fair woman upon whom Zeus has placed the horns of a heifer, and who wanders over sea and land stung by Hera's gadfly, now appears in the play as a further example of the tyranny of the gods. At first Prometheus refuses to share his secret with her, but listens sympathetically to the story of her sufferings. He then reveals the decree of the oracle: that a descendant, from Zeus himself, will one day bring the tyrant to destruction.

Zeus now sends Hermes to urge Prometheus to reveal the secret, for he thinks that if he can learn it, he may avert any calamity it might threaten. Hermes, though reproving Prometheus for his hatred and pride, is unable either to induce Prometheus to disclose the secret or to supplicate his enemy. The Chorus then resolves to share with Prometheus the tortures of Zeus; and the drama closes with rumbles of thunder and flashes of lightning as Zeus again applies his age-long tortures to the defiant and invincible Prometheus. We shall find the same unyielding spirit in the *Manfred* of Byron.

Swinburne, in his magnificent "Ode to Victor Hugo", celebrates the greatness of the eternal protester against injustice:

"As once the high God bound  
With many a rivet round  
Man's saviour, and with iron nailed him through,



At the wild end of things,  
Where even his own bird's wings  
Flagged, whence the sea shone like a drop of dew,  
From Caucasus beheld below  
Past fathoms of unfathomable snow;

So the strong God, the chance  
Central of circumstance,  
Still shows him exile who will not be slave;  
All thy great fame and thee  
Girt by the dim strait sea  
With multitudinous walls of wandering wave;  
Shows us our greatest from his throne  
Fate-stricken, and rejected of his own.

Yea, he <sup>1</sup> is strong, thou say'st,  
A mystery many-faced,  
The wild beasts know him and the wild birds flee,  
The blind night sees him, death  
Shrinks beaten at his breath,  
And his right hand is heavy on the sea:  
We know he hath made us, and is king;  
We know not if he care for anything.

Thus much, no more, we know;  
He bade what is be so,  
Bade light be and bade night be, one by one;  
Bade hope and fear, bade ill  
And good redeem and kill,  
Till all men be aweary of the sun  
And his world burn in its own flame  
And bear no witness longer of his name.

Yet though all this be thus,  
Be those men praised of us

---

<sup>1</sup> "he" refers to "the Strong God."

Who have loved and wrought and sorrowed and not sinned  
 For fame or fear or gold,  
 Nor waxed for winter cold,  
 Nor changed for changes of the worldly wind;  
 Praised above men of men be these,  
 Till this one world and work we know shall cease.

Yea, one thing more than this,  
 We know that one thing is,  
 The splendor of a spirit without blame,  
 That not the laboring years  
 Blind-born, nor any fears,  
 Nor men nor any gods can tire or tame;  
 But purer power with fiery breath  
 Fills, and exalts above the gulfs of death.

Praised above men be thou,  
 Whose laurel-laden brow,  
 Made for the morning, droops not in the night;  
 Praised and beloved, that none  
 Of all thy great things done  
 Flies higher than thy most equal spirit's flight;  
 Praised, that nor doubt nor hope could bend  
 Earth's loftiest head, found upright to the end."

*Prometheus Bound* is the only one extant of three great Aeschylean dramas, *Prometheus the Fire Giver*, *Prometheus Bound*, *Prometheus Unbound*. In the last drama of the trilogy a reconciliation was effected of which we have a hint in the present play in Prometheus' prophecy (p. 103),

"He'll hasten unto me,  
 As I to him shall haste,  
 For friendship and for peace."

In similar vein Bertrand Russell, commenting on the Promethean spirit, says: "To defy with Promethean constancy a hostile universe, to keep its evil always in view, always ac-

tively hated, to refuse no pain that the malice of Power can invent appears to be the duty of all who will not bow before the inevitable. But the indignation is still a bondage, for it compels our thoughts to be occupied with an evil world; and in the fierceness of desire from which rebellion springs there is a kind of self-assertion which it is necessary for the wise to overcome." (*The Free Man's Worship, Mysticism and Logic*). Perhaps it was in this spirit that Aeschylus closed his trilogy.

What then is the meaning of the *Prometheus Bound*? Is Aeschylus, as the latest authority, J. T. Sheppard, believes, suggesting that "even Zeus had to learn his lesson once; namely that he could not continue to rule by violence alone, but must learn wisdom. And Prometheus also had to make a compromise with strength" or, as J. A. Symonds holds, is the view of Zeus as a tyrant, in this middle play of the great trilogy, Prometheus' own prejudiced account, and is Zeus rather the all-powerful and beneficent ruler of the universe against whom, inexplicable as it may seem, Prometheus was wrong in rebelling (*Greek Poets*, Vol. I)? The first view makes Prometheus resemble the Job of the Symposium, the second suggests the Job of the Additions. It is with the spirit of conciliation that Shelley begins his *Prometheus Unbound*. To strength and wisdom (as represented by Zeus and Prometheus) one other thing foreign to the Greeks was necessary, namely love, even for one's enemies. When Prometheus in Shelley's drama expresses pity for Zeus, the reign of the tyrant is over.

### References.

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*Attic and Elizabethan Tragedy* (E. P. Dutton, New York, 1908); A. E. Haigh, *The Tragic Drama of the Greeks* (Oxford, London, 1898); *The Attic Theatre* (Oxford, 1907); J. T. Sheppard, *Aeschylus and Sophocles* (Longmans, New York, 1927).

TEXT OF THE PLAY

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

PROMETHEUS

OKEANOS

HEPHÆSTOS

IO

HERMES

STRENGTH

FORCE

*Chorus of Ocean Nymphs*

## PROMETHEUS BOUND

### ARGUMENT

*In the old time, when Cronos was sovereign of the Gods, Zeus, whom he had begotten, rose up against him, and the Gods were divided in their counsels, some, the Titans chiefly, siding with the father, and some with the son. And Prometheus, the son of Earth or Themis, though one of the Titans, supported Zeus, as did also Okeanos, and by his counsels Zeus obtained the victory, and Cronos was chained in Tartaros, and the Titans buried under mountains, or kept in bonds in Hades. And then Prometheus, seeing the miseries of the race of men, of whom Zeus took little heed, stole the fire which till then had belonged to none but Hephæstos and was used only for the Gods, and gave it to mankind, and taught them many arts whereby their wretchedness was lessened. But Zeus being wroth with Prometheus for this deed, sent Hephæstos, with his two helpers, Strength and Force, to fetter him to a rock on Caucasos.*

*And in yet another story was the cruelty of the Gods made known. For Zeus loved Io, the daughter of Inachos, king of Argos, and she was haunted by visions of the night, telling her of his passion, and she told her father thereof. And Inachos, sending to the God at Delphi, was told to drive Io forth from her home. And Zeus gave her the horns of a cow, and Hera, who hated her because she was dear to Zeus, sent with her a gadfly that stung her, and gave her no rest, and drove her over many lands.*

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*Note.*—The play is believed to have been the second of a Trilogy, of which the first was *Prometheus the Fire-giver*, and the third *Prometheus Unbound*.



SCENE.—SKYTHIA, *on the heights of Caucasos. The Euxine seen in the distance*

[*Enter* HEPHÆSTOS, STRENGTH, and FORCE, *leading*  
PROMETHEUS *in chains*<sup>1</sup>]

STRENGTH. Lo! to a plain, earth's boundary remote  
We now are come,—the tract as Skythian known,  
A desert inaccessible: and now,  
Hephæstos, it is thine to do the hests  
The Father gave thee, to these lofty crags  
To bind this crafty trickster fast in chains  
Of adamantine bonds that none can break;  
For he thy choice flower stealing, the bright glory  
Of fire that all arts spring from, hath bestowed it  
On mortal men. And so for fault like this  
He now must pay the Gods due penalty,  
That he may learn to bear the sovereign rule.  
Of Zeus, and cease from his philanthropy.

HEPHÆSTOS. O Strength, and thou, O Force, the hest of  
Zeus,  
As far as touches you, attains its end,  
And nothing hinders. Yet my courage fails  
To bind a God of mine own kin by force  
To this bare rock where tempests wildly sweep;  
And yet I needs must muster courage for it:  
'Tis no slight thing the Father's words to scorn.  
O thou of Themis [*to* PROMETHEUS] wise in counsel son,  
Full deep of purpose, lo! against my will,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The scene seems at first an exception to the early conventional rule, which forbade the introduction of a third actor on the Greek stage. But it has been noticed that (1) Force does not speak, and (2) Prometheus does not speak till Strength and Force have retired, and that it is therefore probable that the whole work of nailing is done on a lay figure or effigy of some kind, and that one of the two who had before taken part in the dialogue then speaks behind it in the character of Prometheus. So the same actor must have appeared in succession as Okeanos, Io, and Hermes.

<sup>2</sup> Prometheus (*Forethought*) is the son of Themis (*Right*) the second occupant of the Pythian Oracle (*Eumen.* v. 2). His sympathy with man leads him to impart the gift which raised them out of savage

I fetter thee against thy will with bonds  
 Of bronze that none can loose, to this lone height,  
 Where thou shalt know nor voice nor face of man,  
 But scorching in the hot blaze of the sun,  
 Shalt lose thy skin's fair beauty. Thou shalt long  
 For starry-mantled night to hide day's sheen,  
 For sun to melt the rime of early dawn;  
 And evermore the weight of present ill  
 Shall wear thee down. Unborn as yet is he  
 Who shall release thee: this the fate thou gain'st  
 As due reward for thy philanthropy.  
 For thou, a God not fearing wrath of Gods,  
 In thy transgression gav'st their power to men;  
 And therefore on this rock of little ease  
 Thou still shalt keep thy watch, nor lying down,  
 Nor knowing sleep, nor ever bending knee;  
 And many groans and wailings profitless  
 Thy lips shall utter; for the mind of Zeus  
 Remains inexorable. Who holds a power  
 But newly gained<sup>3</sup> is ever stern of mood.

STRENGTH. Let be! Why linger in this idle pity?  
 Why dost not hate a God to Gods a foe,  
 Who gave thy choicest prize to mortal men?

HEPHÆSTOS. Strange is the power of kin and intercourse.<sup>4</sup>

STRENGTH. I own it; yet to slight the Father's words,  
 How may that be? Is not that fear the worse?

HEPHÆSTOS. Still art thou ruthless, full of savagery.

STRENGTH. There is no help in weeping over him:  
 Spend not thy toil on things that profit not.

HEPHÆSTOS. O handicraft to me intolerable!

animal life, and for this Zeus, who appears throughout the play as a hard taskmaster, sentences him to fetters. Hephæstos, from whom this fire had been stolen, has a touch of pity for him. Strength, who comes as the servant, not of Hephæstos, but of Zeus himself, acts, as such, with merciless cruelty.

<sup>3</sup> The generalized statement refers to Zeus, as having but recently expelled Cronos from his throne in Heaven.

<sup>4</sup> Hephæstos, as the great fire-worker, had taught Prometheus to use the fire which he afterwards bestowed on men.

STRENGTH. Why loath'st thou it? Of these thy present  
griefs

That craft of thine is not one whit the cause.

HEPHÆSTOS. And yet I would some other had that skill.

STRENGTH. All things bring toil except for Gods to reign;<sup>5</sup>  
For none but Zeus can boast of freedom true.

HEPHÆSTOS. Too well I see the proof, and gainsay not.

STRENGTH. Wilt thou not speed to fix the chains on him,  
Lest He, the Father, see thee loitering here?

HEPHÆSTOS. Well, here the handcuffs thou may'st see  
prepared.

STRENGTH. In thine hands take him. Then with all thy  
might

Strike with thine hammer; nail him to the rocks.

HEPHÆSTOS. The work goes on, I ween, and not in vain.

STRENGTH. Strike harder, rivet, give no whit of ease:  
A wondrous knack has he to find resource,  
Even where all might seem to baffle him.

HEPHÆSTOS. Lo! this his arm is fixed inextricably.

STRENGTH. Now rivet thou this other fast, that he  
May learn, though sharp, that he than Zeus is duller.

HEPHÆSTOS. No one but he could justly blame my work.

STRENGTH. Now drive the stern jaw of the adamant wedge  
Right through his chest with all the strength thou hast.

HEPHÆSTOS. Ah me! Prometheus, for thy woes I groan.

STRENGTH. Again, thou'rt loth, and for the foes of Zeus  
Thou groanest: take good heed to it lest thou  
Ere long with cause thyself commiserate.

HEPHÆSTOS. Thou see'st a sight unsightly to our eyes.

STRENGTH. I see this man obtaining his deserts:  
Nay, cast thy breast-chains round about his ribs.

HEPHÆSTOS. I must needs do it. Spare thine o'er much  
bidding;

Go thou below and rivet both his legs,<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Perhaps, "All might is ours except o'er Gods to rule."

<sup>6</sup> The words indicate that the effigy of Prometheus, now nailed to the rock, was, as being that of a Titan, of colossal size.

STRENGTH. Nay, I will bid thee, urge thee to thy work.

HEPHÆSTOS. There, it is done, and that with no long toil.

STRENGTH. Now with thy full power fix the galling fetters:  
Thou hast a stern o'erlooker of thy work.

HEPHÆSTOS. Thy tongue but utters words that match thy form.<sup>7</sup>

STRENGTH. Choose thou the melting mood; but chide not me  
For my self-will and wrath and ruthlessness.

HEPHÆSTOS. Now let us go, his limbs are bound in chains.

STRENGTH. Here then wax proud, and stealing what belongs  
To the Gods, to mortals give it. What can they  
Avail to rescue thee from these thy woes?  
Falsely the Gods have given thee thy name,  
Prometheus, Forethought; forethought thou dost need  
To free thyself from this rare handiwork.

[*Exeunt* HEPHÆSTOS, STRENGTH, and FORCE, *leaving*  
PROMETHEUS *on the rock.*]

PROMETHEUS.<sup>8</sup> Thou firmament of God, and swift-winged  
winds,

Ye springs of rivers, and of ocean waves  
That smile innumerable! Mother of us all,  
O Earth, and Sun's all-seeing eye, behold,  
I pray, what I a God from Gods endure.

Behold in what foul case  
I for ten thousand years  
Shall struggle in my woe,  
In these unseemly chains.

Such doom the new-made Monarch of the Blest  
Hath now devised for me.

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<sup>7</sup> The touch is characteristic as showing that here, as in the *Eumenides*, Æschylos relied on the horribleness of the masks, as part of the machinery of his plays.

<sup>8</sup> The silence of Prometheus up to this point was partly, as has been said, consequent on the conventional laws of the Greek drama, but it is also a touch of supreme insight into the heroic temper. In the presence of his torturers, the Titan will not utter even a groan. When they are gone, he appeals to the sympathy of Nature.

Woe, woe! The present and the oncoming pang  
 I wail, as I search out  
 The place and hour when end of all these ills  
 Shall dawn on me at last.

What say I? All too clearly I foresee  
 The things that come, and nought of pain shall be  
 By me unlooked-for; but I needs must bear  
 My destiny as best I may, knowing well  
 The might resistless of Necessity.  
 And neither may I speak of this my fate,  
 Nor hold my peace. For I, poor I, through giving  
 Great gifts to mortal men, am prisoner made  
 In these fast fetters; yea, in fennel stalk <sup>9</sup>  
 I snatched the hidden spring of stolen fire,  
 Which is to men a teacher of all arts,  
 Their chief resource. And now this penalty  
 Of that offence I pay, fast riveted  
 In chains beneath the open firmament.

Ha! ha! What now?

What sound, what odour floats invisibly? <sup>10</sup>  
 Is it of God or man, or blending both?  
 And has one come to this remotest rock  
 To look upon my woes? Or what wills he?  
 Behold me bound, a God to evil doomed,  
 The foe of Zeus, and held  
 In hatred by all Gods  
 Who tread the courts of Zeus:

---

<sup>9</sup>The legend is from Hesiod (*Theogon.*, v. 567). The fennel, or *narthex*, seems to have been a large umbelliferous plant, with a large stem filled with a sort of pith, which was used when dry as tinder. Stalks were carried as wands (the *thyrsi*) by the men and women who joined in Bacchanalian processions. In modern botany, the name is given to the plant which produces Asafœtida, and the stem of which, from its resinous character, would burn freely, and so connect itself with the Promethean myth. On the other hand, the *Narthex Asafœtida* is found at present only in Persia, Afghanistan, and the Punjab.

<sup>10</sup>The ocean nymphs, like other divine ones, would be anointed with ambrosial unguents, and the odor would be wafted before them by the rustling of their wings. This too we may think of as part of the "stage effects" of the play.

And this for my great love,  
 Too great, for mortal men.  
 Ah me! what rustling sounds  
 Hear I of birds not far?  
 With the light whirr of wings  
 The air re-echoeth:

All that draws nigh to me is cause of fear.<sup>11</sup>

[*Enter Chorus of OCEAN NYMPHS, with wings, floating in the air.*<sup>12</sup>]

CHORUS. Nay, fear thou nought: in love  
 All our array of wings  
 In eager race hath come  
 To this high peak, full hardly gaining o'er  
 Our Father's mind and will;  
 And the swift-rushing breezes bore me on:  
 For lo! the echoing sound of blows on iron  
 Pierced to our cave's recess, and put to flight  
 My shamefast modesty,  
 And I in unshod haste, on winged car,  
 To thee rushed hitherward.

PROMETHEUS. Ah me! ah me!  
 Offspring of Tethys blest with many a child,  
 Daughters of Old Okeanos that rolls  
 Round all the earth with never-sleeping stream,  
 Behold ye me, and see  
 With what chains fettered fast,  
 I on the topmost crags of this ravine  
 Shall keep my sentry-post unenviable.

CHORUS. I see it, O Prometheus, and a mist  
 Of fear and full of tears comes o'er mine eyes,  
 Thy frame beholding thus,

---

<sup>11</sup> The words are not those of a vague terror only. The sufferer knows that his tormentor is to come to him before long on wings, and therefore the sound as of the flight of birds is full of terrors.

<sup>12</sup> By the same stage mechanism the Chorus remains in the air till, at the request of Prometheus, they alight.



Writhing on these high rocks  
In adamantine ills.

New pilots now o'er high Olympos rule,  
And with new-fashioned laws  
Zeus reigns, down-trampling right,  
And all the ancient powers He sweeps away.

PROMETHEUS. Ah! would that 'neath the Earth, 'neath  
Hades too,

Home of the dead, far down to Tartaros  
Unfathomable He in fetters fast

In wrath had hurled me down:  
So neither had a God

Nor any other mocked at these my woes;  
But now, the wretched plaything of the winds,  
I suffer ills at which my foes rejoice.

CHORUS. Nay, which of all the Gods  
Is so hard-hearted as to joy in this?  
Who, Zeus excepted, doth not pity thee

In these thine ills? But He,  
Ruthless, with soul unbent,

Subdues the heavenly host, nor will He cease <sup>13</sup>  
Until his heart be satiate with power,  
Or some one seize with subtle stratagem  
The sovran might that so resistless seemed.

PROMETHEUS. Nay, of a truth, though put to evil  
shame,

In massive fetters bound,  
The Ruler of the Gods

Shall yet have need of me, yes, e'en of me,  
To tell the counsel new  
That seeks to strip from him

---

<sup>13</sup> Here, as throughout the play, the poet puts into the mouth of his *dramatis personæ* words which must have seemed to the devouter Athenians sacrilegious enough to call for an indictment before the Areiopagos. But the final play of the Trilogy came, we may believe, as the *Eumenides* did in its turn, as a reconciliation of the conflicting thoughts that rise in men's minds out of the seeming anomalies of the world.



His sceptre and his might of sovereignty.  
 In vain will He with words  
 Or suasion's honeyed charms  
 Soothe me, nor will I tell  
 Through fear of his stern threats,  
 Ere He shall set me free  
 From these my bonds, and make,  
 Of his own choice, amends  
 For all these outrages.

CHORUS. Full rash art thou, and yield'st  
 In not a jot to bitterest form of woe;  
 Thou art o'er-free and reckless in thy speech:  
 But piercing fear hath stirred  
 My inmost soul to strife;  
 For I fear greatly touching thy distress,  
 As to what haven of these woes of thine  
 Thou now must steer: the son of Cronos hath  
 A stubborn mood and heart inexorable.

PROMETHEUS. I know that Zeus is hard,  
 And keeps the Right supremely to himself;  
 But then, I trow, He'll be  
 Full pliant in his will,  
 When He is thus crushed down.  
 Then, calming down in his mood  
 Of hard and bitter wrath,  
 He'll hasten unto me,  
 As I to him shall haste,  
 For friendship and for peace.

CHORUS. Hide it not from us, tell us all the tale:  
 For what offence Zeus, having seized thee thus,  
 So wantonly and bitterly insults thee:  
 If the tale hurt thee not, inform thou us.

PROMETHEUS. Painful are these things to me e'en to speak:  
 Painful is silence; everywhere is woe.  
 For when the high Gods fell on mood of wrath,  
 And hot debate of mutual strife was stirred,  
 Some wishing to hurl Cronos from his throne,

That Zeus, forsooth, might reign; while others strove,  
Eager that Zeus might never rule the Gods:  
Then I, full strongly seeking to persuade  
The Titans, yea, the sons of Heaven and Earth,  
Failed of my purpose. Scorning subtle arts,  
With counsels violent, they thought that they  
By force would gain full easy mastery.  
But then not once or twice my mother Themis  
And Earth, one form though bearing many names,<sup>14</sup>  
Had prophesied the future, how 'twould run,  
That not by strength nor yet by violence,  
But guile, should those who prospered gain the day.  
And when in my words I this counsel gave,  
They deigned not e'en to glance at it at all.  
And then of all that offered, it seemed best  
To join my mother, and of mine own will,  
Not against his will, take my side with Zeus,  
And by my counsels, mine, the dark deep pit  
Of Tartaros the ancient Cronos holds,  
Himself and his allies. Thus profiting  
By me, the mighty ruler of the Gods  
Repayes me with these evil penalties:  
For somehow this disease in sovereignty  
Inheres, of never trusting to one's friends.<sup>15</sup>  
And since ye ask me under what pretence  
He thus maltreats me, I will show it you:  
For soon as He upon his father's throne  
Had sat secure, forthwith to divers Gods  
He divers gifts distributed, and his realm  
Began to order. But of mortal men  
He took no heed, but purposed utterly  
To crush their race and plant another new;

---

<sup>14</sup> The words leave it uncertain whether Themis is identified with Earth, or, as in the *Eumenides* (v. 2) distinguished from her. The Titans as a class, then, children of Okeanos and Chthôn (another name for *Land* or *Earth*), are the kindred rather than the brothers of Prometheus.

<sup>15</sup> The generalizing words here, as in v. 35, appeal to the Athenian hatred of all that was represented by the words *tyrant* and *tyranny*.

And, I excepted, none dared cross his will;  
 But I did dare, and mortal men I freed  
 From passing on to Hades thunder-stricken;  
 And therefore am I bound beneath these woes,  
 Dreadful to suffer, pitiable to see:  
 And I, who in my pity thought of men  
 More than myself, have not been worthy deemed  
 To gain like favour, but all ruthlessly  
 I thus am chained, foul shame this sight to Zeus.

CHORUS. Iron-hearted must he be and made of rock  
 Who is not moved, Prometheus, by thy woes:  
 Fain could I wish I ne'er had seen such things,  
 And, seeing them, am wounded to the heart.

PROMETHEUS. Yea, I am piteous for my friends to see.

CHORUS. Did'st thou not go to farther lengths than this?

PROMETHEUS. I made men cease from contemplating death.<sup>16</sup>

CHORUS. What medicine did'st thou find for that disease?

PROMETHEUS. Blind hopes I gave to live and dwell with them.

CHORUS. Great service that thou did'st for mortal men!

PROMETHEUS. And more than that, I gave them fire, yes I.

CHORUS. Do short-lived men the flaming fire possess?

PROMETHEUS. Yea, and full many an art they'll learn from  
 it.

CHORUS. And is it then on charges such as these  
 That Zeus maltreats thee, and no respite gives  
 Of many woes? And has thy pain no end?

PROMETHEUS. End there is none, except as pleases Him.

CHORUS. How shall it please? What hope hast thou?

See'st not

That thou hast sinned? Yet to say how thou sinned'st  
 Gives me no pleasure, and is pain to thee.

Well! let us leave these things, and, if we may,  
 Seek out some means to 'scape from this thy woe.

---

<sup>16</sup> The state described is that of men who "through fear of death are all their lifetime subject to bondage." That state, the parent of all superstition, fostered the slavish awe in which Zeus delighted. Prometheus, representing the active intellect of man, bestows new powers, new interests, new hopes, which at last divert them from that fear.

PROMETHEUS. 'Tis a light thing for one who has his foot  
 Beyond the reach of evil to exhort  
 And counsel him who suffers. This to me  
 Was all well known. Yea, willing, willingly  
 I sinned, nor will deny it. Helping men,  
 I for myself found trouble: yet I thought not  
 That I with such dread penalties as these  
 Should wither here on these high-towering crags,  
 Lighting on this lone hill and neighbourless.  
 Wherefore wail not for these my present woes,  
 But, drawing nigh, my coming fortunes hear,  
 That ye may learn the whole tale to the end.  
 Nay, hearken, hearken; show your sympathy  
 With him who suffers now. 'Tis thus that woe,  
 Wandering, now falls on this one, now on that.

CHORUS. Not to unwilling hearers hast thou uttered,  
 Prometheus, thy request,  
 And now with nimble foot abounding  
 My swiftly rushing car,  
 And the pure æther, path, of birds of heaven,  
 I will draw near this rough and rocky land,  
 For much do I desire  
 To hear this tale, full measure, of thy woes.

[*Enter OKEANOS, on a car drawn by a winged gryphon.*]

OKEANOS. Lo, I come to thee, Prometheus,  
 Reaching goal of distant journey,<sup>17</sup>  
 Guiding this my winged courser  
 By my will, without a bridle;  
 And thy sorrows move my pity.  
 Force, in part, I deem, of kindred  
 Leads me on, nor know I any,  
 Whom, apart from kin, I honour  
 More than thee, in fuller measure.

---

<sup>17</sup> The home of Okeanos was in the far west, at the boundary of the great stream surrounding the whole world, from which he took his name.

This thou shalt own true and earnest:  
I deal not in glozing speeches.  
Come then, tell me how to help thee;  
Ne'er shalt thou say that one more friendly  
Is found than unto thee is Okean.

PROMETHEUS. Let be. What boots it? Thou then too art  
come

To gaze upon my sufferings. How did'st dare  
Leaving the stream that bears thy name, and caves  
Hewn in the living rock, this land to visit,  
Mother of iron? What then, art thou come  
To gaze upon my fall and offer pity?  
Behold this sight: see here the friend of Zeus,  
Who helped to seat him in his sovereignty,  
With what foul outrage I am crushed by him!

OKEANOS I see, Prometheus, and I wish to give thee  
My best advice, all subtle though thou be.  
Know thou thyself,<sup>18</sup> and fit thy soul to moods  
To thee full new. New king the Gods have now;  
But if thou utter words thus rough and sharp,  
Perchance, though sitting far away on high,  
Zeus yet may hear thee, and his present wrath  
Seem to thee but as child's play of distress.  
Nay, thou poor sufferer, quit the rage thou hast,  
And seek a remedy for these thine ills.  
A tale thrice-told, perchance I seem to speak:  
Lo! this, Prometheus, is the punishment  
Of thine o'er lofty speech, nor art thou yet  
Humbled, nor yieldest to thy miseries,  
And fain would'st add fresh evils unto these.  
But thou, if thou wilt take me as thy teacher,  
Wilt not kick out against the pricks; seeing well  
A monarch reigns who gives account to none.  
And now I go, and will an effort make,  
If I, perchance, may free thee from thy woes;

---

<sup>18</sup> One of the sayings of the Seven Sages, already recognized and quoted as a familiar proverb.

Be still then, hush thy petulance of speech,  
Or knowest thou not, o'er-clever as thou art,  
That idle tongues must still their forfeit pay?

PROMETHEUS. I envy thee, seeing thou art free from blame  
Though thou shared'st all, and in my cause wast bold;<sup>19</sup>  
Nay, let me be, nor trouble thou thyself;  
Thou wilt not, canst not soothe Him; very hard  
Is He of soothing. Look to it thyself,  
Lest thou some mischief meet with in the way.

OKEANOS. It is thy wont thy neighbours' minds to school  
Far better than thine own. From deeds, not words,  
I draw my proof. But do not draw me back  
When I am hasting on, for lo, I deem,  
I deem that Zeus will grant this boon to me,  
That I should free thee from these woes of thine.

PROMETHEUS. I thank thee much, yea, ne'er will cease to  
thank; :

For thou no whit of zeal dost lack; yet take,  
I pray, no trouble for me; all in vain  
Thy trouble, nothing helping, e'en if thou  
Should'st care to take the trouble. Nay, be still;  
Keep out of harm's way; sufferer though I be,  
I would not therefore wish to give my woes  
A wider range o'er others. No, not so:  
For lo! my mind is wearied with the grief  
Of that my kinsman Atlas, who doth stand  
In the far West, supporting on his shoulders  
The pillars of the earth and heaven, a burden  
His arms can ill but hold: I pity too  
The giant dweller of Kilikian caves,  
Dread portent, with his hundred hands, subdued  
By force, the mighty Typhon,<sup>20</sup> who arose

<sup>19</sup> In the mythos, Okeanos had given his daughter Hesione in marriage to Prometheus after the theft of fire, and thus had identified himself with his transgression.

<sup>20</sup> The volcanic character of the whole of Asia Minor, and the liability to earthquakes which has marked nearly every period of its history, led men to connect it also with the traditions of the Titans, some ac-



'Gainst all the Gods, with sharp and dreadful jaws  
 Hissing out slaughter, and from out his eyes  
 There flashed the terrible brightness as of one  
 Who would lay low the sovereignty of Zeus.  
 But the unsleeping dart of Zeus came on him,  
 Down-swooping thunderbolt that breathes out flame,  
 Which from his lofty boastings startled him,  
 For he i' the heart was struck, to ashes burnt,  
 His strength all thunder-shattered; and he lies  
 A helpless, powerless carcase, near the strait  
 Of the great sea, fast pressed beneath the roots  
 Of ancient Ætna, where on highest peak  
 Hephæstos sits and smites his iron red-hot,  
 From whence hereafter streams of fire shall burst,<sup>21</sup>  
 Devouring with fierce jaws the golden plains  
 Of fruitful, fair Sikelia. Such the wrath  
 That Typhon shall belch forth with bursts of storm,  
 Hot, breathing fire, and unapproachable,  
 Though burnt and charred by thunderbolts of Zeus.  
 Not inexperienced art thou, nor dost need  
 My teaching: save thyself, as thou know'st how;  
 And I will drink my fortune to the dregs,  
 Till from his wrath the mind of Zeus shall rest.

OKEANOS. Know'st thou not this, Prometheus, even this,  
 Of wrath's disease wise words the healers are?

PROMETHEUS. Yea, could one soothe the troubled heart in  
 time,  
 Nor seek by force to tame the soul's proud flesh.

OKEANOS. But in due forethought with bold daring blent,  
 What mischief see'st thou lurking? Tell me this.

PROMETHEUS. Toil bootless, and simplicity full fond.

cordingly placing the home of Typhon in Phrygia, some near Sardis, some, as here, in Kilikia. Hesiod (*Theogon.* v. 820) describes Typhon (or Typhoeus) as a serpent-monster hissing out fire; Pindar (*Pyth.* i. 30, viii. 21) as lying with his head and breast crushed beneath the weight of Ætna, and his feet extending to Cumæ.

<sup>21</sup> The words point probably to an eruption, then fresh in men's memories, which had happened B.C. 476.



OKEANOS. Let me, I pray, that sickness suffer, since  
'Tis best being wise to have not wisdom's show.

PROMETHEUS. Nay, but this error shall be deemed as mine.

OKEANOS. Thy word then clearly sends me home at once.

PROMETHEUS. Yea, lest thy pity for me make a foe. . . .

OKEANOS. What! of that new king on his mighty throne?

PROMETHEUS. Look to it, lest his heart be vexed with thee.

OKEANOS. Thy fate, Prometheus, teaches me that lesson.

PROMETHEUS. Away, withdraw! keep thou the mind thou  
hast.

OKEANOS. Thou urgest me who am in act to haste;  
For this my bird four-footed flaps with wings  
The clear path of the æther; and full fain  
Would he bend knee in his own stall at home. [Exit]

#### STROPHE I

CHORUS. I grieve, Prometheus, for thy dreary fate,  
Shedding from tender eyes  
The dew of plenteous tears;  
With streams, as when the watery south wind blows,  
My cheek is wet;  
For lo! these things are all unenviable,  
And Zeus, by his own laws his sway maintaining,  
Shows to the elder Gods  
A mood of haughtiness.

#### ANTISTROPHE I

And all the country echoeth with the moan,  
And poureth many a tear  
For that magnific power  
Of ancient days far-seen that thou did'st share  
With those of one blood sprung;  
And all the mortal men who hold the plain  
Of holy Asia as their land of sojourn,  
They grieve in sympathy  
For thy woes lamentable.

## STROPHE II

And they, the maiden band who find their home  
On distant Colchian coasts,  
Fearless of fight,<sup>22</sup>  
Or Skythian horde in earth's remotest clime,  
By far Mæotic lake;<sup>23</sup>

## ANTISTROPHE II

And warlike glory of Arabia's tribes,  
Who nigh to Caucasos  
In rock-fort dwell,  
An army fearful, with sharp-pointed spear  
Raging in war's array.

## STROPHE III

One other Titan only have I seen,  
One other of the Gods,  
Thus bound in woes of adamantine strength—  
Atlas, who ever groans  
Beneath the burden of a crushing might,  
The out-spread vault of heaven.

## ANTISTROPHE III

And lo! the ocean billows murmur loud  
In one accord with him;  
The sea-depths groan, and Hades' swarthy pit  
Re-echoeth the sound,  
And fountains of clear rivers, as they flow,  
Bewail his bitter griefs.

---

<sup>22</sup> These are, of course, the Amazons, who were believed to have come through Thrakè from the Tauric Chersonesos, and had left traces of their name and habits in the Attic traditions of Theseus.

<sup>23</sup> Beyond the plains of Skythia, and the lake Mæotis (the sea of Azov) there would be the great river Okeanos, which was believed to flow round the earth.

PROMETHEUS. Think not it is through pride or stiff self-will  
That I am silent. But my heart is worn,  
Self-contemplating, as I see myself  
Thus outraged. Yet what other hand than mine  
Gave these young Gods in fulness all their gifts?  
But these I speak not of; for I should tell  
To you that know them. But those woes of men,  
List ye to them,—how they, before as babes,  
By me were roused to reason, taught to think;  
And this I say, not finding fault with men,  
But showing my good-will in all I gave.  
For first, though seeing, all in vain they saw,  
And hearing, heard not rightly. But, like forms  
Of phantom-dreams, throughout their life's whole length  
They muddled all at random; did not know  
Houses of brick that catch the sunlight's warmth,  
Nor yet the work of carpentry. They dwelt  
In hollowed holes, like swarms of tiny ants,  
In sunless depths of caverns; and they had  
No certain signs of winter, nor of spring  
Flower-laden, nor of summer with her fruits;  
But without counsel fared their whole life long,  
Until I showed the risings of the stars,  
And settings hard to recognise. And I  
Found Number for them, chief device of all,  
Groupings of letters, Memory's handmaid that,  
And mother of the Muses. And I first  
Bound in the yoke wild steeds, submissive made  
Or to the collar or men's limbs, that so  
They might in man's place bear his greatest toils;  
And horses trained to love the rein I yoked  
To chariots, glory of wealth's pride of state;  
Nor was it any one but I that found  
Sea-crossing, canvas-wingèd cars of ships:  
Such rare designs inventing (wretched me!)  
For mortal men, I yet have no device  
By which to free myself from this my woe.

CHORUS. Foul shame thou sufferest: of thy sense bereaved,

Thou errest greatly: and, like leech unskilled,  
Thou lovest heart when smitten with disease,  
And know'st not how to find the remedies  
Wherewith to heal thine own soul's sicknesses.

PROMETHEUS. Hearing what yet remains thou'lt wonder more,

What arts and what resources I devised:  
And this the chief: if any one fell ill,  
There was no help for him, nor healing food,  
Nor unguent, nor yet potion; but for want  
Of drugs they wasted, till I showed to them  
The blendings of all mild medicaments,  
Wherewith they ward the attacks of sickness sore.  
I gave them many modes of prophecy;  
And I first taught them what dreams needs must prove  
True visions, and made known the ominous sounds  
Full hard to know; and tokens by the way,  
And flights of taloned birds I clearly marked,—  
Those on the right propitious to mankind,  
And those sinister,—and what form of life  
They each maintain, and what their enmities  
Each with the other, and their loves and friendships;  
And of the inward parts the plumpness smooth.  
And with what colour they the Gods would please,  
And the streaked comeliness of gall and liver:  
And with burnt limbs enwrapt in fat, and chine,  
I led men on to art full difficult:  
And I gave eyes to omens drawn from fire,  
Till then dim-visioned. So far then for this.  
And 'neath the earth the hidden boons for men,  
Bronze, iron, silver, gold, who else could say  
That he, ere I did, found them? None, I know,  
Unless he fain would babble idle words.  
In one short word, then, learn the truth condensed,—  
All arts of mortals from Prometheus spring.

CHORUS. Nay, be not thou to men so over-kind,  
While thou thyself art in sore evil case;  
For I am sanguine that thou too, released  
From bonds, shalt be as strong as Zeus himself.

PROMETHEUS. It is not thus that Fate's decree is fixed;  
But I, long crushed with twice ten thousand woes  
And bitter pains, shall then escape my bonds;  
Art is far weaker than Necessity.

CHORUS. Who guides the helm, then, of Necessity?

PROMETHEUS. Fates triple-formed, Errinyes unforgetting.

CHORUS. Is Zeus, then, weaker in his might than these?

PROMETHEUS. Not even He can 'scape the thing decreed.

CHORUS. What is decreed for Zeus but still to reign?

PROMETHEUS. Thou may'st no further learn, ask thou no  
more.

CHORUS. 'Tis doubtless some dread secret which thou hidest.

PROMETHEUS. Of other theme make mention, for the time  
Is not yet come to utter this, but still  
It must be hidden to the uttermost;  
For by thus keeping it it is that I  
Escape my bondage foul, and these my pains.

#### STROPHE I

CHORUS. Ah! ne'er may Zeus the Lord,  
Whose sovran sway rules all,  
His strength in conflict set  
Against my feeble will!  
Nor may I fail to serve  
The Gods with holy feast  
Of whole burnt-offerings,  
Where the stream ever flows  
That bears my father's name,  
The great Okeanos!  
Nor may I sin in speech!  
May this grace more and more  
Sink deep into my soul  
And never fade away!

## ANTISTROPHE I

Sweet is it in strong hope  
To spend long years of life,  
With bright and cheering joy  
Our heart's thoughts nourishing.  
I shudder, seeing thee  
Thus vexed and harassed sore  
By twice ten thousand woes;  
For thou in pride of heart,  
Having no fear of Zeus,  
In thine own obstinacy,  
Dost show for mortal men,  
Prometheus, love o'ermuch.

## STROPHE II

See how that boon, dear friends,  
For thee is bootless found.  
Say, where is any help?  
What aid from mortals comes?

Hast thou not seen this brief and powerless life,  
Fleeting as dreams, with which man's purblind race  
Is fast in fetters bound?  
Never shall counsels vain  
Of mortal men break through  
The harmony of Zeus.

## ANTISTROPHE II

This lesson have I learnt  
Beholding thy sad fate,  
Prometheus! Other strains  
Come back upon my mind,  
When I sang wedding hymns around thy bath,  
And at thy bridal bed, when thou did'st take  
In wedlock's holy bands  
One of the same sire born,

Our own Hesione,  
 Persuading her with gifts  
 As wife to share thy couch.

[Enter Io in form like a fair woman with a heifer's horns,<sup>24</sup>  
 followed by the Spectre of ARGOS]

Io. What land is this? What people? Whom shall I  
 Say that I see thus vexed  
 With bit and curb of rock?  
 For what offence dost thou  
 Bear fatal punishment?  
 Tell me to what far land  
 I've wandered here in woe.  
 Ah me! ah me!

Again the gadfly stings me miserable.  
 Spectre of Argos, thou, the earth-born one—  
 Ah, keep him off, O Earth!  
 I fear to look upon that herdsman dread,  
 Him with ten thousand eyes:  
 Ah lo! he cometh with his crafty look,  
 Whom Earth refuses even dead to hold;<sup>25</sup>  
 But coming from beneath  
 He hunts me miserable,  
 And drives me famished o'er the sea-beach sand.

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<sup>24</sup> So Io was represented, we are told, by Greek sculptors (Herod. ii. 41), as Isis was by those of Egypt. The points of contact between the myth of Io and that of Prometheus, as adopted, or perhaps developed, by Æschylos are—(1) that from her the destined deliverer of the chained Titan is to come; (2) that both were suffering from the cruelty of Zeus; (3) that the wanderings of Io gave scope for the wild tales of far countries on which the imagination of the Athenians fed greedily. But, as the *Suppliants* may serve to show, the story itself had a strange fascination for him. In the birth of Epaphos, and Io's release from her frenzy, he saw, it may be, a reconciliation of what had seemed hard to reconcile, a solution of the problems of the world, like in kind to that which was shadowed forth in the lost *Prometheus Unbound*.

<sup>25</sup> Argos had been slain by Hermes, and his eyes transferred by Hera to the tail of the peacock, and that bird was henceforth sacred to her.



## STROPHE

And still his waxened reed-pipe soundeth clear  
A soft and slumberous strain;  
O heavens! O ye Gods!  
Whither do these long wanderings lead me on?  
For what offence, O son of Cronos, what,  
Hast thou thus bound me fast  
In these great miseries?  
Ah me! ah me!

And why with terror of the gadfly's sting  
Dost thou thus vex me, frenzied in my soul?  
Burn me with fire, or bury me in earth,  
Or to wild sea-beasts give me as a prey:  
Nay, grudge me not, O King,  
An answer to my prayers:  
Enough my many-wandered wanderings  
Have exercised my soul,  
Nor have I power to learn  
How to avert the woe.

[*To Prometheus.*] Hear'st thou the voice of maiden crowned  
with horns?

PROMETHEUS. Surely I heard the maid by gadfly driven,  
Daughter of Inachos, who warmed the heart  
Of Zeus with love, and now through Hera's hate  
Is tried, perforce, with wanderings over-long?

## ANTISTROPHE

Io. How is it that thou speak'st my father's name?  
Tell me, the suffering one,  
Who art thou, who, poor wretch,  
Who thus so truly nam'st me miserable,  
And tell'st the plague from Heaven,  
Which with its haunting stings  
Wears me to death? Ah woe!  
And I with famished and unseemly bounds

Rush madly, driven by Hera's jealous craft.

Ah, who of all that suffer, born to woe,  
Have trouble like the pain that I endure?

But thou, make clear to me,

What yet for me remains,

What remedy, what healing for my pangs.

Show me, if thou dost know:

Speak out and tell to me,

The maid by wanderings vexed.

PROMETHEUS. I will say plainly all thou seek'st to know;  
Not in dark tangled riddles, but plain speech,  
As it is meet that friends to friends should speak;  
Thou see'st Prometheus who gave fire to men.

Io. O thou to men as benefactor known,  
Why, poor Prometheus, sufferest thou this pain?

PROMETHEUS. I have but now mine own woes ceased to wail.

Io. Wilt thou not then bestow this boon on me?

PROMETHEUS. Say what thou seek'st, for I will tell thee  
all.

Io. Tell me, who fettered thee in this ravine?

PROMETHEUS. The counsel was of Zeus, the hand  
Hephæstos'.

Io. Of what offence dost thou the forfeit pay?

PROMETHEUS. Thus much alone am I content to tell.

Io. Tell me, at least, besides, what end shall come  
To my drear wanderings; when the time shall be.

PROMETHEUS. Not to know this is better than to know.

Io. Nay, hide not from me what I have to bear.

PROMETHEUS. It is not that I grudge the boon to thee.

Io. Why then delayest thou to tell the whole?

PROMETHEUS. Not from ill will, but loth to vex thy soul.

Io. Nay, care thou not beyond what pleases me.

PROMETHEUS. If thou desire it I must speak. Hear then.

CHORUS. Not yet though; grant me share of pleasure too.  
Let us first ask the tale of her great woe,  
While she unfolds her life's consuming chances;  
Her future sufferings let her learn from thee.

PROMETHEUS. 'Tis thy work, Io, to grant these their wish,  
On other grounds and as thy father's kin: <sup>26</sup>  
For to bewail and moan one's evil chance,  
Here where one trusts to gain a pitying tear  
From those who hear,—this is not labour lost.

Io. I know not how to disobey your wish;  
So ye shall learn the whole that ye desire  
In speech full clear. And yet I blush to tell  
The storm that came from God, and brought the loss  
Of maiden face, what way it seized on me.  
For nightly visions coming evermore  
Into my virgin bower, sought to woo me  
With glozing words. "O virgin greatly blest,  
Why art thou still a virgin when thou might'st  
Attain to highest wedlock? For with dart  
Of passion for thee Zeus doth glow, and fain  
Would make thee his. And thou, O child, spurn not  
The bed of Zeus, but go to Lerna's field,  
Where feed thy father's flocks and herds,  
That so the eye of Zeus may find repose  
From this his craving." With such visions I  
Was haunted every evening, till I dared  
To tell my father all these dreams of night,  
And he to Pytho and Dodona sent  
Full many to consult the Gods, that he,  
Might learn what deeds and words would please Heaven's  
lords.

And they came bringing speech of oracles  
Shot with dark sayings, dim and hard to know.  
At last a clear word came to Inachos  
Charging him plainly, and commanding him  
To thrust me from my country and my home,  
To stray at large <sup>27</sup> to utmost bounds of earth;

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<sup>26</sup> Inachos the father of Io (identified with the Argive river of the same name), was, like all rivers, a son of Okeanos, and therefore brother to the nymphs who had come to see Prometheus.

<sup>27</sup> The words used have an almost technical meaning as applied to animals that were consecrated to the service of a God, and set free to

And, should he gainsay, that the fiery bolt  
 Of Zeus should come and sweep away his race.  
 And he, by Loxias' oracles induced,  
 Thrust me, against his will, against mine too,  
 And drove me from my home; but spite of all,  
 The curb of Zeus constrained him this to do.  
 And then forthwith my face and mind were changed;  
 And hornèd, as ye see me, stung to the quick  
 By biting gadfly, I with maddened leap  
 Rushed to Kerchneia's fair and limpid stream,  
 And fount of Lerna.<sup>28</sup> And a giant herdsman,  
 Argos, full rough of temper, followed me,  
 With many an eye beholding, on my track:  
 And him a sudden and unlooked-for doom  
 Deprived of life. And I, by gadfly stung,  
 By scourge from Heaven am driven from land to land.  
 What has been done thou hearest. And if thou  
 Can'st tell what yet remains of woe, declare it;  
 Nor in thy pity soothe me with false words;  
 For hollow words, I deem, are worst of ills.

CHORUS. Away, away, let be:

Ne'er thought I that such tales  
 Would ever, ever come unto mine ears;  
 Nor that such terrors, woes and outrages,  
 Hard to look on, hard to bear,  
 Would chill my soul with sharp goad, double-edged.  
 Ah fate! Ah fate!

I shudder, seeing Io's fortune strange.

PROMETHEUS. Thou art too quick in groaning, full of fear:  
 Wait thou a while until thou hear the rest.

CHORUS. Speak thou and tell. Unto the sick 'tis sweet  
 Clearly to know what yet remains of pain.

---

wander where they liked. The fate of Io, as at once devoted to Zeus and animalised in form, was thus shadowed forth in the very language of the Oracle.

<sup>28</sup> Lerna was the lake near the mouth of the Inachos, close to the sea. Kerchneia may perhaps be identified with the Kenchreæ, the haven of Korinth in later geographies.

PROMETHEUS. Your former wish ye gained full easily.  
Your first desire was to learn of her  
The tale she tells of her own sufferings;  
Now therefore hear the woes that yet remain  
For this poor maid to bear at Hera's hands.  
And thou, O child of Inachos! take heed  
To these my words, that thou may'st hear the goal  
Of all thy wanderings. First then, turning hence  
Towards the sunrise, tread the untilled plains,  
And thou shalt reach the Skythian nomads, those  
Who on smooth-rolling waggons dwell aloft  
In wicker houses, with far-darting bows  
Duly equipped. Approach thou not to these,  
But trending round the coasts on which the surf  
Beats with loud murmurs, traverse thou that clime.  
On the left hand there dwell the Chalybes,  
Who work in iron. Of these do thou beware,  
For fierce are they and most inhospitable;  
And thou wilt reach the river fierce and strong,  
True to its name. This seek not thou to cross,  
For it is hard to ford, until thou come  
To Caucasos itself, of all high hills  
The highest, where a river pours its strength  
From the high peaks themselves. And thou must cross  
Those summits near the stars, must onward go  
Towards the south, where thou shalt find the host  
Of the Amâzons, hating men, whose home  
Shall one day be around Thermôdon's bank,  
By Themiskyra, where the ravenous jaws  
Of Salmydessos ope upon the sea,  
Treacherous to sailors, stepdame stern to ships.  
And they with right good-will shall be thy guides;  
And thou, hard by a broad pool's narrow gates,  
Wilt pass to the Kimmerian isthmus. Leaving  
This boldly, thou must cross Mæotic channel;  
And there shall be great fame 'mong mortal men  
Of this thy journey, and the Bosporos

Shall take its name from thee. And Europe's plain  
Then quitting, thou shalt gain the Asian coast.  
Doth not the all-ruling monarch of the Gods  
Seem all ways cruel? For, although a God,  
He, seeking to embrace this mortal maid,  
Imposed these wanderings on her. Thou hast found,  
O maiden! bitter suitor for thy hand;  
For great as are the ills thou now hast heard,  
Know that as yet not e'en the prelude's known.

Io. Ah woe! woe! woe!

PROMETHEUS. Again thou groan'st and criest. What wilt do  
When thou shalt learn the evils yet to come?

CHORUS. What! are there troubles still to come for her?

PROMETHEUS. Yea, stormy sea of woe most lamentable.

Io. What gain is it to live? Why cast I not  
Myself at once from this high precipice,  
And, dashed to earth, be free from all my woes?  
Far better were it once for all to die  
Than all one's days to suffer pain and grief.

PROMETHEUS. My struggles then full hardly thou would'st  
bear,  
For whom there is no destiny of death;  
For that might bring a respite from my woes:  
But now there is no limit to my pangs  
Till Zeus be hurled out from his sovereignty.

Io. What! shall Zeus e'er be hurled from his high state?

PROMETHEUS. Thou would'st rejoice, I trow, to see that  
fall.

Io. How should I not, when Zeus so foully wrongs me?

PROMETHEUS. That this is so thou now may'st hear from  
me.

Io. Who then shall rob him of his sceptred sway?

PROMETHEUS. Himself shall do it by his own rash plans.

Io. But how? Tell this, unless it bringeth harm.

PROMETHEUS. He shall wed one for whom one day he'll  
grieve.

Io. Heaven-born or mortal? Tell, if tell thou may'st.



PROMETHEUS. Why ask'st thou who? I may not tell thee that.

Io. Shall his bride hurl him from his throne of might?

PROMETHEUS. Yea; she shall bear child mightier than his sire.

Io. Has he no way to turn aside that doom?

PROMETHEUS. No, none; unless I from my bonds be loosed.<sup>29</sup>

Io. Who then shall loose thee 'gainst the will of Zeus?

PROMETHEUS. It must be one of thy posterity.

Io. What, shall a child of mine free thee from ills?

PROMETHEUS. Yea, the third generation after ten.<sup>30</sup>

Io. No more thine oracles are clear to me.

PROMETHEUS. Nay, seek not thou thine own drear fate to know.

Io. Do not, a boon presenting, then withdraw it.

PROMETHEUS. Of two alternatives, I'll give thee choice.

Io. Tell me of what, then give me leave to choose.

PROMETHEUS. I give it then. Choose, or that I should tell

Thy woes to come, or who shall set me free.

CHORUS. Of these be willing one request to grant

To her, and one to me; nor scorn my words:

Tell her what yet of wanderings she must bear,

And me who shall release thee. This I crave.

PROMETHEUS. Since ye are eager, I will not refuse

To utter fully all that ye desire.

Thee, Io, first I'll tell thy wanderings wild,

Thou, write it in the tablets of thy mind.

When thou shalt cross the straits, of continents

The boundary, take thou the onward path

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<sup>29</sup> The lines refer to the story that Zeus loved Thetis the daughter of Nereus, and followed her to Caucasos, but abstained from marriage with her because Prometheus warned him that the child born of that union should overthrow his father. Here the future is used of what was still contingent only. In the lost play of the Trilogy the myth was possibly brought to its conclusion and connected with the release of Prometheus.

<sup>30</sup> Heracles, whose genealogy was traced through Alcmena, Perseus, Danae, Danaos and seven other names, to Epaphos and Io.



On to the fiery-hued and sun-tracked East.  
And first of all, to frozen Northern blasts  
Thou'lt come, and there beware the rushing whirl,  
Lest it should come upon thee suddenly,  
And sweep thee onward with the cloud-rack wild;  
Crossing the sea-surf till thou come at last  
Unto Kisthene's Gorgoneian plains,  
Where dwell the grey-haired virgin Phorkides,  
Three, swan-shaped, with one eye between them all  
And but one tooth; whom nor the sun beholds  
With radiant beams, nor yet the moon by night:  
And near them are their wingèd sisters three,  
The Gorgons, serpent-tressed, and hating men,  
Whom mortal wight may not behold and live.  
Such is one ill I bid thee guard against;  
Now hear another monstrous sight: Beware  
The sharp-beaked hounds of Zeus that never bark,  
The Gryphons, and the one-eyed, mounted host  
Of Arimaspians, who around the stream  
That flows o'er gold, the ford of Pluto, dwell:  
Draw not thou nigh to them. But distant land  
Thou shalt approach, the swarthy tribes who dwell  
By the sun's fountain, Æthiopia's stream:  
By its banks wend thy way until thou come  
To that great fall where from the Bybline hills  
The Neilos pours its pure and holy flood;  
And it shall guide thee to Neilotic land,  
Three-angled, where, O Io, 'tis decreed  
For thee and for thy progeny to found  
A far-off colony. And if of this  
Aught seem to thee as stammering speech obscure,  
Ask yet again and learn it thoroughly:  
Far more of leisure have I than I like.

CHORUS. If thou hast aught to add, aught left untold  
Of her sore-wasting wanderings, speak it out;  
But if thou hast said all, then grant to us  
The boon we asked. Thou dost not, sure, forget it.

PROMETHEUS. The whole course of her journeying she hath heard,

And that she know she hath not heard in vain  
I will tell out what troubles she hath borne  
Before she came here, giving her sure proof  
Of these my words. The greater bulk of things  
I will pass o'er, and to the very goal  
Of all thy wanderings go. For when thou cam'st  
To the Molossian plains, and by the grove  
Of lofty-ridged Dodona, and the shrine  
Oracular of Zeus Thesprotian,  
And the strange portent of the talking oaks,  
By which full clearly, not in riddle dark,  
Thou wast addressed as noble spouse of Zeus,—  
If aught of pleasure such things give to thee,—  
Thence strung to frenzy, thou did'st rush along  
The sea-coast's path to Rhea's mighty gulf,<sup>31</sup>  
In backward way from whence thou now art vexed,  
And for all time to come that reach of sea,  
Know well, from thee Ionian shall be called,  
To all men record of thy journeyings.  
These men are tokens to thee that my mind  
Sees somewhat more than that is manifest.

What follows [*to the Chorus*] I will speak to you and her  
In common, on the track of former words  
Returning once again. A city stands,  
Canôbos, at its country's furthest bound,  
Hard by the mouth and silt-bank of the Nile;  
There Zeus shall give thee back thy mind again,  
With hand that works no terror touching thee,—  
Touch only—and thou then shalt bear a child  
Of Zeus begotten, Epaphos, "Touch-born,"  
Swarthy of hue, whose lot shall be to reap  
The whole plain watered by the broad-streamed Neilos:  
And in the generation fifth from him  
A household numbering fifty shall return

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<sup>31</sup> The Adriatic or Ionian Gulf.

Against their will to Argos, in their flight  
From wedlock with their cousins. And they too,  
(Kites but a little space behind the doves)  
With eager hopes pursuing marriage rites  
Beyond pursuit shall come; and God shall grudge  
To give up their sweet bodies. And the land  
Pelagian shall receive them, when by stroke  
Of woman's murderous hand these men shall lie  
Smitten to death by daring deed of night:  
For every bride shall take her husband's life,  
And dip in blood the sharp two-edged sword  
(So to my foes may Kypris show herself!) <sup>32</sup>  
Yet one of that fair band shall love persuade  
Her husband not to slaughter, and her will  
Shall lose its edge; and she shall make her choice  
Rather as weak than murderous to be known.  
And she at Argos shall a royal seed  
Bring forth (long speech 'twould take to tell this clear)  
Famed for his arrows, who shall set me free <sup>33</sup>  
From these my woes. Such was the oracle  
Mine ancient mother Themis, Titan-born,  
Gave to me; but the manner and the means,—  
That needs a lengthy tale to tell the whole,  
And thou can'st nothing gain by learning it.

Io. Eleleu! Oh, Eleleu!

The throbbing pain inflames me, and the mood  
Of frenzy-smitten rage;  
The gadfly's pointed sting,  
Not forged with fire, attacks,  
And my heart beats against my breast with fear.  
Mine eyes whirl round and round:  
Out of my course I'm borne  
By the wild spirit of fierce agony,  
And cannot curb my lips,

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<sup>32</sup> Argos.

<sup>33</sup> Heracles, who came to Caucasos, and with his arrows slew the eagle that devoured Prometheus.

And turbid speech at random dashes on  
Upon the waves of dread calamity.

## STROPHE I

CHORUS. Wise, very wise was he  
Who first in thought conceived this maxim sage,  
And spread it with his speech,—  
That the best wedlock is with equals found,  
And that a craftsman, born to work with hands,  
Should not desire to wed  
Or with the soft luxurious heirs of wealth,  
Or with the race that boast their lineage high.

## ANTISTROPHE I

Oh ne'er, oh ne'er, dread Fates,  
May ye behold me as the bride of Zeus,  
The partner of his couch,  
Nor may I wed with any heaven-born spouse!  
For I shrink back, beholding Io's lot  
Of loveless maidenhood,  
Consumed and smitten low exceedingly  
By the wild wanderings from great Hera sent!

## STROPHE II

To me, when wedlock is on equal terms,  
It gives no cause to fear:  
Ne'er may the love of any of the Gods,  
The strong Gods, look on me  
With glance I cannot 'scape!

## ANTISTROPHE II

That fate is war that none can war against,  
Source of resourceless ill;  
Nor know I what might then become of me:  
I see not how to 'scape  
The counsel deep of Zeus.

PROMETHEUS. Yea, of a truth shall Zeus, though stiff of will,  
Be brought full low. Such bed of wedlock now  
Is he preparing, one to cast him forth  
In darkness from his sovereignty and throne.  
And then the curse his father Cronos spake  
Shall have its dread completion, even that  
He uttered when he left his ancient throne;  
And from these troubles no one of the Gods  
But me can clearly show the way to 'scape.  
I know the time and manner: therefore now  
Let him sit fearless, in his peals on high  
Putting his trust, and shaking in his hands  
His darts fire-breathing. Nought shall they avail  
To hinder him from falling shamefully  
A fall intolerable. Such a combatant  
He arms against himself, a marvel dread,  
Who shall a fire discover mightier far  
Than the red levin, and a sound more dread  
Than roaring of the thunder, and shall shiver  
That plague sea-born that causeth earth to quake,  
The trident, weapon of Poseidon's strength:  
And stumbling on this evil, he shall learn  
How far apart a king's lot from a slave's.

CHORUS. What thou dost wish thou mutterest against Zeus.

PROMETHEUS. Things that shall be, and things I wish, I speak.

CHORUS. And must we look for one to master Zeus?

PROMETHEUS. Yea, troubles harder far than these are his.

CHORUS. Art not afraid to vent such words as these?

PROMETHEUS. What can I fear whose fate is not to die?

CHORUS. But He may send on thee worse pain than this.

PROMETHEUS. So let Him do: nought finds me unprepared.

CHORUS. Wisdom is theirs who Adrasteia worship.

PROMETHEUS. Worship then, praise and flatter him that rules;

My care for Zeus is nought, and less than nought:

Let Him act, let Him rule this little while,  
E'en as He will; for long He shall not rule  
Over the Gods. But lo! I see at hand  
The courier of the Gods, the minister  
Of our new sovereign. Doubtless he has come  
To bring me tidings of some new device.

[*Enter HERMES*]

HERMES. Thee do I speak to,—thee, the teacher wise,  
The bitterly o'er-bitter, who 'gainst Gods  
Hast sinned in giving gifts to short-lived men—  
I speak to thee, the filcher of bright fire.  
The Father bids thee say what marriage thou  
Dost vaunt, and who shall hurl Him from his might;  
And this too not in dark mysterious speech,  
But tell each point out clearly. Give me not,  
Prometheus, task of double journey. Zeus  
Thou see'st, is not with such words appeased.

PROMETHEUS. Stately of utterance, full of haughtiness  
Thy speech, as fits a messenger of Gods.  
Ye yet are young in your new rule, and think  
To dwell in painless towers. Have I not  
Seen two great rulers driven forth from thence?  
And now the third, who reigneth, I shall see  
In basest, quickest fall. Seem I to thee  
To shrink and quail before these new-made Gods?  
Far, very far from that am I. But thou,  
Track once again the path by which thou camest;  
Thou shalt learn nought of what thou askest me.

HERMES. It was by such self-will as this before  
That thou did'st bring these sufferings on thyself.

PROMETHEUS. I for my part, be sure, would never change  
My evil state for that thy bonds slave's lot.

HERMES. To be the bonds slave of this rock, I trow,  
Is better than to be Zeus' trusty herald!

PROMETHEUS. So it is meet the insulter to insult.



HERMES. Thou waxest proud, 'twould seem, of this thy doom.

PROMETHEUS. Wax proud! God grant that I may see my foes

Thus waxing proud, and thee among the rest!

HERMES. Dost blame me then for thy calamities?

PROMETHEUS. In one short sentence—all the Gods I hate,

Who my good turns with evil turns repay.

HERMES. Thy words prove thee with no slight madness plagued.

PROMETHEUS. If to hate foes be madness, mad I am.

HERMES. Not one could bear thee wert thou prosperous.

PROMETHEUS. Ah me!

HERMES. That word is all unknown to Zeus.

PROMETHEUS. Time waxing old can many a lesson teach.

HERMES. Yet thou at least hast not true wisdom learnt.

PROMETHEUS. I had not else addressed a slave like thee.

HERMES. Thou wilt say nought the Father asks, 'twould seem.

PROMETHEUS. Fine debt I owe him, favour to repay.

HERMES. Me as a boy thou scornest then, forsooth.

PROMETHEUS. And art thou not a boy, and sillier far,  
If that thou thinkest to learn aught from me?

There is no torture nor device by which

Zeus can impel me to disclose these things

Before these bonds that outrage me be loosed.

Let then the blazing levin-flash be hurled;

With white-winged snow-storm and with earth-born thunders

Let Him disturb and trouble all that is;

Nought of these things shall force me to declare

Whose hand shall drive him from his sovereignty.

HERMES. See if thou findest any help in this.

PROMETHEUS. Long since all this I've seen, and formed my plans.

HERMES. O fool, take heart, take heart at last in time,  
To form right thoughts for these thy present woes.



PROMETHEUS. Like one who soothes a wave, thy speech in  
vain

Vexes my soul. But deem not thou that I,  
Fearing the will of Zeus, shall e'er become  
As womanised in mind, or shall entreat  
Him whom I greatly loathe, with upturned hand,  
In woman's fashion, from these bonds of mine  
To set me free. Far, far am I from that.

HERMES. It seems that I, saying much, shall speak in  
vain;

For thou in nought by prayers art pacified,  
Or softened in thy heart, but like a colt  
Fresh harnessed, thou dost champ thy bit, and strive,  
And fight against the reins. Yet thou art stiff  
In weak device; for self-will, by itself,  
In one who is not wise, is less than nought.  
Look to it, if thou disobey my words,  
How great a storm and triple wave of ills,  
Not to be 'scaped, shall come on thee; for first,  
With thunder and the levin's blazing flash  
The Father this ravine of rock shall crush,  
And shall thy carcase hide, and stern embrace  
Of stony arms shall keep thee in thy place.  
And having traversed space of time full long,  
Thou shalt come back to light, and then his hound,  
The wingèd hound of Zeus, the ravening eagle,  
Shall greedily make banquet of thy flesh,  
Coming all day an uninvited guest,  
And glut himself upon thy liver dark.  
And of that anguish look not for the end,  
Before some God shall come to bear thy woes,  
And will to pass to Hades' sunless realm,  
And the dark cloudy depths of Tartaros.  
Wherefore take heed. No feigned boast is this,  
But spoken all too truly; for the lips  
Of Zeus know not to speak a lying speech,  
But will perform each single word. And thou,

Search well, be wise, nor think that self-willed pride  
Shall ever better prove than counsel good.

CHORUS. To us doth Hermes seem to utter words  
Not out of season; for he bids thee quit  
Thy self-willed pride and seek for counsel good.  
Hearken thou to him. To the wise of soul  
It is foul shame to sin persistently.

PROMETHEUS. To me who knew it all  
He hath this message borne;  
And that a foe from foes  
Should suffer is not strange.  
Therefore on me be hurled  
The sharp-edged wreath of fire;  
And let heaven's vault be stirred  
With thunder and the blasts  
Of fiercest winds; and Earth  
From its foundations strong,  
E'en to its deepest roots,  
Let storm-wind make to rock;  
And let the Ocean wave,  
With wild and foaming surge,  
Be heaped up to the paths  
Where move the stars of heaven;  
And to dark Tartaros  
Let Him my carcase hurl,  
With mighty blasts of force:  
Yet me He shall not slay.

HERMES. Such words and thoughts from one  
Brain-stricken one may hear.  
What space divides his state  
From frenzy? What repose  
Hath he from maddened rage?  
But ye who pitying stand  
And share his bitter griefs,  
Quickly from hence depart,  
Lest the relentless roar  
Of thunder stun your soul.

CHORUS. With other words attempt  
To counsel and persuade,  
And I will hear: for now  
Thou hast this word thrust in  
That we may never bear.  
How dost thou bid me train  
My soul to baseness vile?  
With him I will endure  
Whatever is decreed.  
Traitors I've learnt to hate,  
Nor is there any plague  
That more than this I loathe.

HERMES. Nay then, remember ye  
What now I say, nor blame  
Your fortune: never say  
That Zeus hath cast you down  
To evil not foreseen.  
Not so; ye cast yourselves:  
For now with open eyes,  
Not taken unawares,  
In Atè's endless net  
Ye shall entangled be  
By folly of your own.

*[A pause, and then flashes of lightning and  
and peals of thunder]*

PROMETHEUS. Yea, now in very deed,  
No more in word alone,  
The earth shakes to and fro,  
And the loud thunder's voice  
Bellows hard by, and blaze  
The flashing levin-fires;  
And tempests whirl the dust,  
And gusts of all wild winds  
On one another leap,  
In wild conflicting blasts,

And sky with sea is blent:  
Such is the storm from Zeus  
That comes as working fear,  
In terrors manifest.  
O Mother venerable!  
O Æther! rolling round  
The common light of all,  
See'st thou what wrongs I bear?

EVERYMAN



## INTRODUCTION

*Everyman* is the greatest of the English Morality plays, and the only extant exemplar which is of more than historical importance, or which can be called dramatically impressive. The others in comparison are dull and prolix; they have insufficient action to sustain the interest; the characters are lifeless abstractions, and the moralizing is oppressive.

A Morality is a drama undertaking the symbolical or allegorical representation of life. Like the Miracle plays, the Moralities grew out of the simple dramatic performances in the medieval church (c. 1450-1600). The names of the authors of these plays in most instances have not been preserved. The Miracle plays depict Bible stories and lives of the saints; the Moralities present the abstract virtues and vices in personified form through the literary devices of symbolism and allegory. A Symbol is a concrete object, which represents an abstract truth; for example, the Fire, or knowledge, given to mankind by Prometheus, or the Cross, symbolizing suffering and sacrifice, which *Everyman* carries to the grave. An Allegory is a double narrative in which a realistic story illustrates and parallels at all points a story of inner meaning. In Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, for example, Giant Despair is physically a powerful giant who keeps Christian and Hopeful in a dark dungeon; symbolically he represents the cloud of melancholy which holds a man in a prison or paralyzes his efforts, and affords "no natural outlet, no relief in word, or sigh, or tear". So in *Everyman* is depicted from the point of view of the Christian Church, the journey through Death that every human being must undergo.

Instead of living in the fear of God, *Everyman* has pursued pleasure and riches, and has chosen surface companions who speedily leave him when he is summoned by Death to his reckoning. Fellowship, Kindred, Cousin, and Goods, one after another turn from *Everyman's* appeals; and finally



Beauty, Strength, Discretion, and Five Wits drop away. Only Knowledge and Good-Deeds support him to the end. Good-Deeds alone avail, for earthly ties are vanity. The soul of man, born in corruption through the sin of Adam, may be purged of his sins by Confession and Penance, by denying the lusts of this world and by doing good deeds. Only through the grace of God, the sacrifice of Christ, the intercession of Mary, and the offices of the sacraments and the priesthood may Everyman be saved.

Not by defiance and the affirmation of his own will, as in the Job of the Symposium and the Prometheus of Aeschylus, but by humbling his spirit in contrition before God may the individual finally achieve Heaven. To conquer life by denying life is a thought underlying oriental religions other than Christianity, for example, Buddhism; and it reappears in elaborated form in the modern philosophy of Schopenhauer (*The World as Will and Idea*).

*Everyman*, when properly acted and staged, is an enthralling drama, as many can testify who recall the production given by the Ben Greet players with Edith Wynne Matheson in the rôle of Everyman. Montrose J. Moses's *Everyman* (N. Y., 1903) contains pictures of the stage performance, a valuable discussion of the Morality play, and a Bibliography. See also A. W. Pollard's *English Miracle Plays, Moralities, and Interludes* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1909); other morality plays may be found in W. Hazlitt's Dodsley, *Select Collections of Old English Plays*, vols. 1 and 2 (London, 1874).

TEXT OF PLAY

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

EVERYMAN

GOD

DEATH

MESSENGER

FELLOWSHIP

COUSIN

KINDRED

GOODS

GOOD-DEEDS

STRENGTH

DISCRETION

FIVE-WITS

BEAUTY

KNOWLEDGE

CONFESSION

ANGEL

DOCTOR

## EVERYMAN

### A Morality Play

*Here beginneth a treatise how the high Father of Heaven sendeth death to summon every creature to come and give account of their lives in this world and is in manner of a moral play.*

MESSENGER. I pray you all give your audience,  
And hear this matter with reverence,  
By figure a moral play.  
The Summoning of Everyman called it is,  
That of our lives and ending shows  
How transitory we be all day.  
This matter is wondrous precious,  
But the intent of it is more gracious  
And sweet to bear away.  
The story saith: Man, in the beginning  
Look well, and take heed to the ending,  
Be you never so gay.  
Ye think sin in the beginning full sweet,  
Which in the end causeth the soul to weep,  
When the body lieth in clay.  
Here shall you see how Fellowship and Jollity,  
Both Strength, Pleasure and Beauty,  
Will fade from thee as flower in May;  
For ye shall hear, how our Heaven King  
Calleth Everyman to a general reckoning.  
Give audience, and hear what He doth say.

God *speaketh*. I perceive here in my majesty,  
How that all creatures be to me unkind,  
Living without dread in worldly prosperity.

Of ghostly sight the people be so blind,  
Drowned in sin, they know me not for their God.  
In worldly riches is all their mind,  
They fear not my righteousness, the sharp rod.  
My law that I showed, when I for them died,  
They forget clean, and shedding of my blood red.  
I hanged between two, it cannot be denied;  
To get them life I suffered to be dead;  
I healed their feet; with thorns hurt was my head.  
I could do no more than I did truly,  
And now I see the people do clean forsake me  
They use the seven deadly sins damnable;  
As pride, covetise, wrath, and lechery  
Now in the world be made commendable;  
And thus they leave of angels the heavenly company.  
Everyman liveth so after his own pleasure,  
And yet of their life they be nothing sure.  
I see the more than I them forbear  
The worse they be from year to year;  
All that liveth appaireth \* fast,  
Therefore I will in all the haste  
Have a reckoning of Everyman's person;  
For an I leave the people thus alone  
In their life and wicked tempests,  
Verily they will become much worse than beasts;  
For now one would by envy another up eat;  
Charity they do all clean forget.  
I hoped well that Everyman  
In my glory should make his mansion,  
And thereto I had them all elect;  
But now I see like traitors deject  
They thank me not for the pleasure that I to them meant,  
Nor yet for their being that I them have lent;  
I proffered the people great multitude of mercy,  
And few there be that asketh it heartily;

---

\* *appaireth*: decays.

They be so cumbered with worldly riches,  
That needs on them I must do justice,  
On Everyman, living without fear.

Where art thou, Death, thou mighty messenger?

DEATH. Almighty God, I am here at your will,  
Your commandment to fulfill.

GOD. Go thou to Everyman,  
And show him in my name  
A pilgrimage he must on him take,  
Which he in no wise may escape;  
And that he bring with him a sure reckoning  
Without delay or any tarrying.

DEATH. Lord, I will in the world go run over all.  
And cruelly out search both great and small.  
Everyman will I beset that liveth beastly  
Out of God's laws, and dreadeth not folly.  
He that loveth riches I will strike with my dart,  
His sight to blind, and from heaven to depart,  
Except that alms be his good friend,  
In hell for to dwell, world without end.  
Lo, yonder I see Everyman walking;  
Full little he thinketh on my coming;  
His mind is on fleshly lusts and his treasure,  
And great pain it shall cause him to endure  
Before the Lord Heaven King.—  
Everyman, stand still; whither art thou going  
Thus gaily? Hast thou thy Maker forgot?

EVERYMAN. Why asketh thou?  
Wouldest thou wit?

DEATH. Yea, sir, I will show you.  
In great haste I am sent to thee  
From God out of His majesty.

EVERYMAN. What, sent to me?

DEATH. Yea, certainly.  
Though thou have forgot Him here,  
He thinketh on thee in the heavenly sphere,  
As, ere we depart, thou shalt know.

EVERYMAN. What desireth God of me?

DEATH. That shall I show thee;  
A reckoning He will needs have  
Without any longer respite.

EVERYMAN. To give a reckoning longer leisure I crave;  
This blind matter troubleth my wit.

DEATH. On thee thou must take a long journey:  
Therefore thy book of count with thee thou bring;  
For turn again thou cannot by no way.  
And look thou be sure of thy reckoning:  
For before God thou shalt answer, and show  
Thy many bad deeds and good but a few,  
How thou hast spent thy life and in what wise,  
Before the chief Lord of Paradise.  
Have ado that we were in that way,  
For wit thou well, thou shalt make none attorney.

EVERYMAN. Full unready I am such reckoning to give.  
I know thee not: what messenger art thou?

DEATH. I am Death, that no man dreadeth,  
For Everyman I rest,<sup>1</sup> and no man spareth.  
For it is God's commandment  
That all to me should be obedient.

EVERYMAN. O Death, thou comest when I had thee  
least in mind;  
In thy power it lieth me to save,  
Yet of my good will I give thee, if thou will be kind,—  
Yea, a thousand pound shalt thou have,—  
And defer this matter till another day.

DEATH. Everyman, it may not be no way.  
I set not by gold, silver, nor riches,  
Ne<sup>2</sup> by pope, emperor, king, duke, ne princes.  
For an I would receive gifts great,  
All the world I might get;  
But my custom is clean contrary.  
I give thee no respite: come hence and not tarry.

---

<sup>1</sup> *rest*, arrest.

<sup>2</sup> *Ne*, nor.



EVERYMAN. Alas, shall I have no longer respite?  
I may say Death giveth no warning.  
To think on thee, it maketh my heart sick,  
For all unready is my book of reckoning.  
But twelve year and I might have a biding,  
My counting-book I would make so clear,  
That my reckoning I should not need to fear.  
Wherefore, Death, I pray thee, for God's mercy,  
Spare me till I be provided of remedy.

DEATH. Thee availeth not to cry, weep, and pray;  
But haste thee lightly that thou were gone that journey,  
And prove thy friends if thou can.  
For wit thou well the tide abideth no man,  
And in the world each living creature  
For Adam's sin must die of nature.

EVERYMAN. Death, if I should this pilgrimage take,  
And my reckoning surely make,  
Show me, for saint<sup>s</sup> charity,  
Should I not come again shortly?

DEATH. No, Everyman; an thou be once there,  
Thou mayst never more come here,  
Trust me verily.

EVERYMAN. O gracious God, in the high seat celestial,  
Have mercy on me in this most need.  
Shall I have no company from this vale terrestrial  
Of mine acquaintance, that way me to lead?

DEATH. Yea, if any be so hardy,  
That would go with thee and bear thee company.  
Hie thee, that thou were gone to God's magnificence,  
Thy reckoning to give before His presence.  
What, weenest thou thy life is given thee,  
And thy worldly goods also?

EVERYMAN. I had weened so, verily.

DEATH. Nay, nay; it was but lent thee:  
For as soon as thou art gone,

---

<sup>s</sup> *saint*, holy.

Another awhile shall have it, and then go therefrom  
Even as thou hast done.

Everyman, thou art mad, that hast thy wits five,  
And here on earth will not amend thy life,  
For suddenly I do come.

EVERYMAN. O wretched caitiff, whither shall I flee,  
That I might 'scape this endless sorrow?  
Now, gentle Death, spare me till to-morrow,  
That I may amend me  
With good advisement.

DEATH. Nay, thereto I will not consent,  
Nor no man will I respite,  
But to the heart suddenly I shall smite  
Without any advisement.

And now out of thy sight I will me hie;  
See thou make thee ready shortly,  
For thou mayst say this is the day  
That no man living may 'scape away.

EVERYMAN. Alas, I may well weep with sighs deep;  
Now have I no manner of company  
To help me in my journey, and me to keep;  
And also my writing is full unready.  
How shall I do now for to excuse me?  
I would to God I had never been got!  
To my soul a full great profit it had be;  
For now I fear pains huge and great.  
The time passeth; Lord, help, that all wrought,  
For though I mourn, it availeth naught.  
The day passeth, and is almost a-go;  
I wot not well what for to do.

To whom were I best my complaint to make?  
What an I to Fellowship thereof spake,  
And showed him of this sudden chance?  
For in him is all mine affiance;  
We have in the world so many a day  
Been good friends in sport and play.  
I see him yonder, certainly

I trust that he will bear me company;  
Therefore to him will I speak to ease my sorrow.  
Well met, good Fellowship, and good-morrow!

FELLOWSHIP *speakesh*. Everyman, good-morrow by this day.

Sir, why lookest thou so piteously?  
If anything be amiss, I pray thee me say,  
That I may help to remedy.

EVERYMAN. Yea, good Fellowship, yea,  
I am in great jeopardy.

FELLOWSHIP. My true friend, show to me your mind.  
I will not forsake thee, to my life's end,  
In the way of good company.

EVERYMAN. That was well spoken, and lovingly.

FELLOWSHIP. Sir, I must needs know your heaviness;  
I have pity to see you in any distress;  
If any have you wronged ye shall revenged be,  
Though I on the ground be slain for thee,—  
Though that I know before that I should die.

EVERYMAN. Verily, Fellowship, gramercy.

FELLOWSHIP. Tush! by thy thanks I set not a straw.  
Show me your grief, and say no more.

EVERYMAN. If I my heart should to you break,  
And then you to turn your mind from me,  
And would not me comfort, when ye hear me speak,  
Then should I ten times sorrier be.

FELLOWSHIP. Sir, I say as I will do in deed.

EVERYMAN. Then be you a good friend at need:  
I have found you true here before.

FELLOWSHIP. And so ye shall evermore:  
For, in faith, an thou go to Hell,  
I will not forsake thee by the way.

EVERYMAN. Ye speak like a good friend: I believe you  
well;  
I shall deserve it an I may.

FELLOWSHIP. I speak of no deserving, by this day.  
For he that will say and nothing do

Is not worthy with good company to go;  
Therefore show me the grief of your mind,  
As to your friend most loving and kind.

EVERYMAN. I shall show you how it is.  
Commanded I am to go a journey,  
A long way, hard and dangerous,  
And give a strait count without delay  
Before the high judge Adonai.<sup>4</sup>

Wherefore, I pray you, bear me company,  
As ye have promised, in this journey.

FELLOWSHIP. That is matter indeed! Promise is duty.  
But an I should take such a voyage on me,  
I know it well, it should be to my pain.  
Also it maketh me afeared, certain.  
But let us take counsel here as well as we can,  
For your words would fear a strong man.

EVERYMAN. Why, ye said if I had need.  
Ye would me never forsake, quick ne dead,  
Though it were to Hell, truly.

FELLOWSHIP. So I said, certainly,  
But such pleasures be set aside, the sooth to say:  
And also, if we took such a journey,  
When should we come again?

EVERYMAN. Nay, never again, till the day of doom.

FELLOWSHIP. In faith, then will not I come there!  
Who hath you these tidings brought?

EVERYMAN. Indeed, Death was with me here.

FELLOWSHIP. Now by God, that all hath bought,  
If Death were the messenger,  
For no man that is living to-day  
I will not go that loath journey—  
Not for the father that begat me!

EVERYMAN. Ye promised otherwise, pardie.<sup>5</sup>

FELLOWSHIP. I wot well I said so truly;  
And yet if thou wilt eat, and drink, and make good cheer,

---

<sup>4</sup> *Adonai*, Hebrew for "Lord God."

<sup>5</sup> *pardie*, par Dieu.

Or haunt to women, the lusty company,  
I would not forsake you, while the day is clear,  
Trust me verily!

EVERYMAN. Yea, thereto ye would be ready,  
To go to mirth, solace, and play.  
Your mind to folly will sooner apply  
Than to bear me company in my long journey.

FELLOWSHIP. Now in good faith, I will not that way.  
But an thou will murder, or any man kill,  
In that I will help thee with a good will.

EVERYMAN. O that is a simple advice indeed!  
Gentle fellow, help me in my necessity;  
We have loved long, and now I need,  
And now, gentle Fellowship, remember me.

FELLOWSHIP. Whether ye have loved me or no,  
By Saint John, I will not with thee go.

EVERYMAN. Yet I pray thee take the labor and do so  
much for me  
To bring me forward, for saint charity,  
And comfort me till I come without the town.

FELLOWSHIP. Nay, an thou would give me a new gown,  
I will not a foot with thee go;  
But an thou had tarried I would not have left thee so.  
And as now, God speed thee in thy journey,  
For from thee I will depart as fast as I may.

EVERYMAN. Whither away, Fellowship? will thou forsake me?

FELLOWSHIP. Yea, by my fay,<sup>e</sup> to God I betake thee.

EVERYMAN. Farewell, good Fellowship; for thee my  
heart is sore;  
Adieu, for ever; I shall see thee no more.

FELLOWSHIP. In faith, Everyman, farewell now at the  
end;

For you I will remember that parting is mourning.

EVERYMAN. Alack! shall we thus depart indeed?  
O Lady, help! without any more comfort,

---

<sup>e</sup> fay, faith.

Lo, Fellowship forsaketh me in my most need.  
 For help in this world whither shall I resort?  
 Fellowship here before me would merry make,  
 And now little sorrow for me doth he take.  
 It is said, in prosperity men friends may find,  
 Which in adversity be full unkind.  
 Now whither for succor shall I flee,  
 Sith that Fellowship hath forsaken me?  
 To my kinsmen I will, truly,  
 Praying them to help me in my necessity.  
 I believe that they will do so,  
 For kind<sup>7</sup> will creep where it may not go.  
 I will go say, for yonder I see them go.  
 Where be ye now, my friends and kinsmen?

KINDRED. Here be we now at your commandment.  
 Cousin, I pray you show us your intent  
 In any wise, and not spare.

COUSIN. Yea, Everyman, and to us declare  
 If ye be disposed to go any whither,  
 For wot you well, we will live and die together.

KINDRED. In wealth and woe we will with you hold,  
 For over his kin a man may be bold.

EVERYMAN. Gramercy, my friends and kinsmen kind.  
 Now shall I show you the grief of my mind.  
 I was commanded by a messenger,  
 That is a high King's chief officer.  
 He bade me go a pilgrimage to my pain,  
 But I know well I shall never come again;  
 Also I must give a reckoning straight,  
 For I have a great enemy, that hath me in wait,  
 Which intendeth me for to hinder.

KINDRED. What account is that which ye must render?  
 That would I know.

EVERYMAN. Of all my works I must show  
 How I have lived and my days spent;  
 Also of ill deeds that I have used

---

<sup>7</sup> *kind*, nature.



In my time, sith life was me lent;  
 And of all virtues that I have refused.  
 Therefore I pray you, go thither with me,  
 To help to make mine account, for saint charity.

COUSIN. What, to go thither? Is that the matter?  
 Nay, Everyman, I had liefer fast, bread and water,  
 All this five year and more.

EVERYMORE. Alas, that ever I was bore,  
 For now shall I never be merry  
 If that you forsake me.

KINDRED. Ah, sir, what? ye be a merry man;  
 Take good heart to you, and make no moan.  
 But one thing I warn you, by Saint Anne,  
 As for me, ye shall go alone.

EVERYMAN. My cousin, will you not with me go?

COUSIN. No, by our Lady; I have the cramp in my toe.  
 Trust not to me, for, so God me speed,  
 I will deceive you in your most need.

KINDRED. It availeth not us to tice.<sup>8</sup>  
 Ye shall have my maid with all my heart.  
 She loveth to go to feasts, there to be nice,  
 And to dance, and abroad to start:  
 I will give her leave to help you in that journey,  
 If that you and she may agree.

EVERYMAN. Now show me the very effect of your  
 mind.

Will you go with me, or abide behind?

KINDRED. Abide behind? yea, that will I an I may!  
 Therefore farewell, till another day.

[Exit KINDRED.]

EVERYMAN. How should I be merry or glad?  
 For fair promises men to me make,  
 But when I have most need, they me forsake.  
 I am deceived; that maketh me sad.

COUSIN. Cousin Everyman, farewell now,  
 For verily I will not go with you;

---

<sup>8</sup> *tice*, persuade.



Also of mine own an unready reckoning  
 I have to account; therefore I make tarrying.  
 Now, God keep thee, for now I go.

[Exit COUSIN.]

EVERYMAN. Ah, Jesus, is all come hereto?  
 Lo, fair words maketh fools fain;  
 They promise and nothing will do certain.  
 My kinsmen promised me faithfully  
 For to abide with me steadfastly,  
 And now fast away do they flee:  
 Even so Fellowship promised me.  
 What friend were best me of to provide?  
 I lose my time here longer to abide.  
 Yet in my mind a thing there is.  
 All my life I have loved riches.  
 If that my Goods now help me might,  
 He would make my heart full light.  
 I will speak to him in this distress.  
 Where art thou, my Goods and Riches?

GOODS. Who calleth me? Everyman, what hast thou  
 haste?

I lie here in corners, trussed and piled so high,  
 And in chests I am locked so fast,  
 Also sacked in bags—thou mayst see with thine eye—  
 I cannot stir; in packs low I lie.  
 What would ye have? lightly me say.

EVERYMAN. Come hither, Goods, in all the haste thou  
 may,  
 For of counsel I must desire thee.

GOODS. Sir, an ye in the world have sorrow or  
 adversity,  
 That can I help you to remedy shortly.

EVERYMAN. It is another disease that grieveth me.  
 In this world it is not, I tell thee so.  
 I am sent for, another way to go,  
 To give a strait count general  
 Before the highest Jupiter of all.

And all my life I have had joy and pleasure in thee;  
Therefore I pray thee go with me,  
For peradventure thou mayst before God Almighty  
My reckoning help to clean and purify.

For it is said ever among,  
That money maketh all right that is wrong.

GOODS. Nay, Everyman, I sing another song.

I follow no man in such voyages;

For an I went with thee

Thou shouldest fare much the worse for me;

For because on me thou did set thy mind,

Thy reckoning I have made blotted and blind,

That thine account thou cannot make truly.

And that hast thou for the love of me.

EVERYMAN. That would grieve me full sore,  
When I should come to that fearful answer.

Up, let us go thither together.

GOODS. Nay, not so, I am too brittle, I may not endure.

I will follow no man one foot, be ye sure.

EVERYMAN. Alas, I have thee loved, and had great  
pleasure

All my life-days on goods and treasure.

GOODS. That is to thy damnation without leasing,<sup>9</sup>

For my love is contrary to the love everlasting.

But if thou had me loved moderately during,

As to the poor give part of me,

Then shouldest thou not in this dolour be,

Nor in this great sorrow and care.

EVERYMAN. Lo, now was I deceived ere I was ware,  
And all I may wite<sup>10</sup> my spending of time.

GOODS. What, weenest thou that I am thine?

EVERYMAN. I had weened so.

GOODS. Nay, Everyman, I say no;

As for a while I was lent thee.

A season thou hast had me in prosperity;

---

<sup>9</sup> *leasing*, lying.

<sup>10</sup> *wite*, blame.

My condition is man's soul to kill;  
If I save one, a thousand I do spill;  
Weenest thou that I will follow thee?  
Nay, from this world, not verily.

EVERYMAN. I had weened otherwise.

GOODS. Therefore to thy soul Goods is a thief;  
For when thou art dead this is my guise  
Another to deceive in this same wise,  
As I have done thee, and all to his soul's reproof.

EVERYMAN. O false Goods, cursed thou be!  
Thou traitor to God, that hast deceived me,  
And caught me in thy snare.

GOODS. Marry, thou brought thyself in care,  
Whereof I am glad,  
I must needs laugh, I cannot be sad.

EVERYMAN. Ah, Goods, thou hast had long my heartily  
love;

I gave thee that which should be the Lord's above.  
But wilt thou not go with me in deed?  
I pray thee truth to say.

GOODS. No, so God me speed,  
Therefore farewell, and have good day.

[*Exit GOODS.*]

EVERYMAN. O, to whom shall I make my moan  
For to go with me in that heavy journey?  
First Fellowship said he would with me gon;  
His words were very pleasant and gay,  
But afterward he left me alone.  
Then spake I to my kinsmen all in despair,  
And also they gave me words fair;  
They lacked no fair speaking,  
But all forsake me in the ending.  
Then went I to my Goods that I loved best,  
In hope to have comfort, but there had I least;  
For my Goods sharply did me tell  
That he bringeth many into hell.  
Then of myself I was ashamed,

And so I am worthy to be blamed;  
Thus may I well myself hate.  
Of whom shall I now counsel take?  
I think that I shall never speed  
Till that I go to my Good-Deed,  
But alas, she is so weak,  
That she can neither go nor speak;  
Yet will I venture on her now.  
My Good-Deeds, where be you?

GOOD-DEEDS. Here I lie, cold in the ground;  
Thy sins hath me sore bound,  
That I cannot stir.

EVERYMAN. O, Good-Deeds, I stand in fear;  
I must you pray of counsel,  
For help now should come right well.

GOOD-DEEDS. Everyman, I have understanding  
That ye be summoned account to make  
Before Messiah, of Jerusalem king;  
An you do by me,<sup>11</sup> that journey with you will I take.

EVERYMAN. Therefore I come to you, my moan to  
make;

I pray you that ye will go with me.

GOOD-DEEDS. I would full fain, but I cannot stand,  
verily.

EVERYMAN. Why, is there anything on you fall?

GOOD-DEEDS. Yea, sir, I may thank you of all;  
If ye had perfectly cheered me,  
Your book of count full ready had be.  
Look, the books of your works and deeds eke,  
As how they lie under the feet,  
To your soul's heaviness.

EVERYMAN. Our Lord Jesus, help me!  
For one letter here I cannot see.

GOOD-DEEDS. There is a blind reckoning in time of  
distress!

---

<sup>11</sup> *by me*, as I advise.

EVERYMAN. Good-Deeds, I pray you help me in this need,  
Or else I am for ever damned indeed;  
Therefore help me to make reckoning  
Before the Redeemer of all thing,  
That king is, and was, and ever shall.

GOOD-DEEDS. Everyman, I am sorry of your fall,  
And fain would I help you, an I were able.

EVERYMAN. Good-Deeds, your counsel I pray you give me.

GOOD-DEEDS. That shall I do verily;  
Though that on my feet I may not go,  
I have a sister that shall with you also,  
Called Knowledge, which shall with you abide,  
To help you to make that dreadful reckoning.

KNOWLEDGE. Everyman, I will go with thee, and be thy guide,  
In thy most need to go by thy side.

EVERYMAN. In good condition I am now in everything,  
And am wholly content with this good thing;  
Thanked be God my creator.

GOOD-DEEDS. And when she hath brought you there,  
Where thou shalt heal thee of thy smart,  
Then go you with your reckoning and your Good-Deeds  
together  
For to make you joyful at heart  
Before the blessed Trinity.

EVERYMAN. My Good-Deeds, gramercy;  
I am well-content, certainly,  
With your words sweet.

KNOWLEDGE. Now go we together lovingly,  
To Confession, that cleansing river.

EVERYMAN. For joy I weep; I would we were there;  
But I pray you give me cognition  
Where dwelleth that holy man, Confession.

KNOWLEDGE. In the house of salvation:

We shall find him in that place,  
That shall us comfort by God's grace.

[*Enter* CONFSSION.]

Lo, this is Confession; kneel down and ask mercy,  
For he is in good conceit with God Almighty.

EVERYMAN. O glorious fountain that all uncleanness  
doth clarify,

Wash from me the spots of vice unclean,  
That on me no sin may be seen.

I come with Knowledge for my redemption,  
Redeemed with heart and full contrition;  
For I am commanded a pilgrimage to take,  
And great accounts before God to make.  
Now, I pray you, Shrift, mother of salvation,  
Help my Good-Deeds for my piteous exclamation.

CONFSSION. I know your sorrow well, Everyman.

Because with Knowledge ye come to me,  
I will you comfort as well as I can,  
And a precious jewel I will give thee,  
Called Penance' voice, voider <sup>12</sup> of adversity.  
Therewith shall your body chastised be,  
With abstinence and perseverance in God's service.

Here shall you receive that scourge of me,  
Which is Penance strong, that ye must endure,  
To remember thy Saviour was scourged for thee  
With sharp scourges, and suffered it patiently.  
So must thou, ere thou 'scape that painful pilgrim-  
age,

Knowledge, keep him in this voyage,  
And by that time Good-Deeds will be with thee.  
But in any wise be sicker <sup>13</sup> of mercy,  
For your time draweth fast, and ye will saved be;  
Ask God mercy, and He will grant truly,

---

<sup>12</sup> *voider*, remover.

<sup>13</sup> *sicker*, sure.

When with the scourge of Penance man doth him bind,  
The oil of forgiveness then shall he find.

[*Exit* CONFESSION.]

EVERYMAN. Thanked be God for His gracious work,  
For now I will my penance begin.  
This hath rejoiced and lighted my heart,  
Though the knots be painful and hard within.

KNOWLEDGE. Everyman, look your penance that ye  
fulfil,  
What pain that ever it to you be,  
And Knowledge shall give you counsel at will,  
How your account ye shall make clearly.

EVERYMAN. O eternal God, O heavenly figure,  
O way of righteousness, O goodly vision,  
Which descended down in a Virgin pure  
Because He would Everyman redeem,  
Which Adam forfeited by his disobedience.  
O blessed Godhead, elect and high-divine,  
Forgive my grievous offence;  
Here I cry thee mercy in this presence.  
O ghostly treasure, O ransom and redeemer  
Of all the world, hope and conductor,  
Mirror of joy, founder of mercy,  
Which illumineth heaven and earth thereby,  
Hear my clamorous complaint, though it late  
be;

Receive my prayers of thy benignity.  
Though I be a sinner most abominable,  
Yet let my name be written in Moses' table.  
O Mary, pray to the Maker of all thing,  
Me for to help at my ending.  
And save me from the power of my enemy,  
For Death assaileth me strongly;  
And, Lady, that I may by mean of thy prayer  
Of your Son's glory to be partner,  
By the means of His passion I it crave,  
I beseech, you, help my soul to save.



Knowledge, give me the scourge of Penance;  
My flesh therewith shall give acquaintance:  
I will now begin, if God give me grace.

KNOWLEDGE.. Everyman, God give you time and space!

Thus I bequeath you in the hands of our Saviour,  
Now may you make your reckoning sure.

EVERYMAN. In the name of the Holy Trinity,  
My body sore punished shall be:

Take this, body, for the sin of the flesh!

Also thou delightest to go gay and fresh,

And in way of damnation thou did me bring;

Therefore suffer now strokes of punishing;

Now Penance I will wade the water clear,

To save me from purgatory, that sharpe fire.

GOOD-DEEDS. I thank God, now I can walk and go;  
And am delivered of my sickness and woe.

Therefore with Everyman I will go, and not spare;

His good works I will help him to declare.

KNOWLEDGE. Now, Everyman, be merry and glad;

Your Good-Deeds cometh, now ye may not be sad;

Now is your Good-Deeds whole and sound,

Going upright upon the ground.

EVERYMAN. My heart is light, and shall be evermore.  
Now will I smite faster than I did before.

GOOD-DEEDS. Everyman, pilgrim, my special friend,  
Blessed be thou without end;

For thee is preparete the eternal glory.

Ye have me made whole and sound,

Therefore I will bide by thee in every stound.

EVERYMAN. Welcome, my Good-Deeds; now I hear thy voice,

I weep for very sweetness of love.

KNOWLEDGE. Be no more sad, but ever rejoice,

God seeth thy living in His throne above;

Put on this garment to thy behoof,

Which is wet with your tears,

Or else before God you may it miss,  
When ye to your journey's end come shall.

EVERYMAN. Gentle Knowledge, what do ye it call?

KNOWLEDGE. It is a garment of sorrow:  
From pain it will you borrow;  
Contrition it is

That getteth forgiveness;  
It pleaseth God passing well.

GOOD-DEEDS. Everyman, will you wear it for your heal?

EVERYMAN. Now blessed be Jesu, Mary's Son!  
For now have I on true contrition.

And let us go now without tarrying.

Good-Deeds, have we clear our reckoning?

GOOD-DEEDS. Yea, indeed I have it here.

EVERYMAN. Then I trust we need not fear;  
Now, friends, let us not part in twain.

KNOWLEDGE. Nay, Everyman, that will we not,

GOOD-DEEDS. Yet must thou lead with thee  
Three persons of great might.

EVERYMAN. Who should they be?

GOOD-DEEDS. Discretion and Strength they hight,  
And thy Beauty may not abide behind.

KNOWLEDGE. Also ye must call to mind  
Your Five-Wits as for your counsellors.

GOOD-DEEDS. You must have them ready at all hours.

EVERYMAN. How shall I get them hither?

KNOWLEDGE. You must call them all together,  
And they will hear you incontinent.

EVERYMAN. My friends, come hither and be present,  
Discretion, Strength, my Five-Wits, and Beauty.

BEAUTY. Here at your will we be all ready.  
What will ye that we should do?

GOOD-DEEDS. That ye would with Everyman go,  
And help him in his pilgrimage.

Advise you; will ye with him or not in that voyage?

STRENGTH. We will bring him all thither,  
To his help and comfort, ye may believe me.

DISCRETION. So will we go with him all together.

EVERYMAN. Almighty God, loved might thou be,  
I give thee laud that I have hither brought  
Strength, Discretion, Beauty and Five-Wits; lack I  
nought;

And my Good-Deeds, with Knowledge clear,  
All be in my company at my will here;  
I desire no more to my business.

STRENGTH. And I, Strength, will by you stand in  
distress,  
Though thou would in battle fight on the ground.

FIVE-WITS. And though it were through the world  
round,

We will not depart for sweet ne sour.

BEAUTY. No more will I unto death's hour  
Whatsoever thereof befall.

DISCRETION. Everyman, advise you first of all;  
Go with a good advisement and deliberation.  
We all give you virtuous monition  
That all shall be well.

EVERYMAN. My friends, hearken what I will tell:  
I pray God reward you in His Heaven sphere.

Now hearken all that be here,

For I will make my testament

Here before you all present.

In alms half my goods I will give with my hands  
twain

In the way of charity, with good intent,

And the other half still shall remain

In quiet to be returned where it ought to be.

This I do in despite of the fiend of hell

To go quite out of his peril

Ever after and this day.

KNOWLEDGE. Everyman, hearken what I say;  
Go to priesthood, I you advise,  
And receive of him in any wise  
The holy sacrament and ointment together;

Then shortly see ye turn again hither;  
We will all abide you here.

FIVE-WITS. Yea, Everyman, hie you that ye ready  
were,

There is no emperor, king, duke, ne baron,  
That of God hath commission,  
As hath the least priest in the world being;  
For of the blessed sacraments pure and benign,  
He beareth the keys and thereof hath the cure;<sup>14</sup>  
For man's redemption it is ever sure,  
Which God for our soul's medicine  
Gave us out of His heart with great pain;  
Here in this transitory life, for thee and me  
The blessed sacraments seven there be,  
Baptism, confirmation, with priesthood good,  
And the sacrament of God's precious flesh and blood,  
Marriage, the holy extreme unction, and penance;  
These seven be good to have in remembrance,  
Gracious sacraments of high divinity.

EVERYMAN. Fain would I receive that holy body  
And meekly to my ghostly father I will go.

FIVE-WITS. Everyman, that is the best that ye can do:  
God will you to salvation bring,

[*Exit EVERYMAN.*]

For priesthood exceedeth all other thing;  
To us Holy Scripture they do teach,  
And converteth man from sin Heaven to reach;  
God hath to them more power given,  
Than to any angel that is in Heaven;  
With five words he may consecrate  
God's body in flesh and blood to make,  
And handleth his Maker between his hands;  
The priest bindeth and unbindeth all bands,  
Both in earth and in Heaven;  
Thou ministers all the sacraments seven;  
Though we kiss thy feet thou were worthy;

---

<sup>14</sup> cure, care.

Thou art surgeon that cureth sin deadly:  
 No remedy we find under God  
 But all only priesthood.  
 Everyman, God gave priests that dignity,  
 And setteth them in His stead among us to be;  
 Thus be they above angels in degree.

KNOWLEDGE. If priests be good it is so surely;  
 But when Jesu hanged on the cross with great smart  
 There He gave, out of His blessed heart,  
 The same sacrament in great torment:  
 He sold them not to us, that Lord omnipotent.  
 Therefore Saint Peter the apostle doth say  
 That Jesu's curse hath all they  
 Which God their Saviour do buy or sell,  
 Or they for any money do take or tell.  
 Sinful priests giveth the sinners example bad;  
 Their children sitteth by other men's fires, I have heard;  
 And some haunteth women's company,  
 With unclean life, as lusts of lechery:  
 These be with sin made blind.

FIVE-WITS. I trust to God no such may we find;  
 Therefore let us priesthood honor,  
 And follow their doctrine for our souls' succor;  
 We be their sheep, and they shepherds be  
 By whom we all be kept in surety.  
 Peace, for yonder I see Everyman come,  
 Which hath made true satisfaction.

GOOD-DEEDS. Methinketh it is he indeed.

[*Enter EVERYMAN*]

EVERYMAN. Now Jesu be your alder speed.<sup>15</sup>  
 I have received the sacrament for my redemption,  
 And then mine extreme unction:  
 Blessed be all they that counselled me to take it.  
 And now, friends, let us go without longer respite;

---

<sup>15</sup> *your alder speed*, the happiness of you all.

I thank God that ye have tarried so long.  
 Now set each of you on this rod your hand,  
 And shortly follow me:

I go before where I would be; God be our guide.

STRENGTH. Everyman, we will not from you go,  
 Till ye have done this voyage long.

DISCRETION. I, Discretion, will bide by you also.

KNOWLEDGE. And though this pilgrimage be never so  
 strong,

I will never part you fro;  
 Everyman, I will be as sure by thee  
 As ever I did by Judas Maccabee.

EVERYMAN, Alas, I am so faint I may not stand,  
 My limbs under me doth fold.

Friends, let us not turn again to this land,  
 Not for all the world's gold,  
 For into this cave must I creep  
 And turn to earth and there to sleep.

BEAUTY. What, into this grave? alas!

EVERYMAN. Yea, there shall ye consume, more and  
 less.

BEAUTY. And what, should I smother here?

EVERYMAN. Yea, by my faith, and never more appear.  
 In this world live no more we shall,  
 But in Heaven before the highest Lord of all.

BEAUTY. I cross out all this; adieu by Saint John;  
 I take my cap in my lap and am gone.

EVERYMAN. What, Beauty, whither will ye?

BEAUTY. Peace, I am deaf; I look not behind me,  
 Not an thou wouldst give me all the gold in thy chest.

[*Exit BEAUTY.*]

EVERYMAN. Alas, whereto may I trust?  
 Beauty goes fast away from me.  
 She promised with me to live and die.

STRENGTH. Everyman, I will thee also forsake and  
 deny;  
 Thy game liketh me not at all.

EVERYMAN. Why, then ye will forsake me all?  
Sweet Strength, tarry a little space.

STRENGTH. Nay, sir, by the rood of grace  
I will hie me from thee fast,  
Though thou weep till thy heart to-brast.<sup>16</sup>

EVERYMAN. Ye would ever bide by me, ye said.

STRENGTH. Yea, I have you far enough conveyed.  
Ye be old enough, I understand,  
Your pilgrimage to take on hand;  
I repent me that I hither came.

EVERYMAN. Strength, you to displease I am to blame;  
Will ye break promise that is debt?

STRENGTH. In faith, I care not;  
Thou art but a fool to complain,  
You spend your speech and waste your brain;  
Go thrust thee into the ground.

[Exit STRENGTH.]

EVERYMAN. I had weened surer I should you have  
found.

He that trusteth in his strength  
She him deceiveth at the length.  
Both Strength and Beauty forsaketh me,  
Yet they promised me fair and lovingly.

DISCRETION. Everyman, I will after Strength be  
gone,  
As for me I will leave you alone.

EVERYMAN. Why, Discretion, will ye forsake me?

DISCRETION. Yea, in faith, I will go from thee  
For when Strength goeth before  
I follow after evermore.

EVERYMAN. Yet, I pray thee, for the love of the Trinity,  
Look in my grave once piteously.

DISCRETION. Nay, so nigh will I not come.  
Farewell, every one!

[Exit DISCRETION.]

---

<sup>16</sup> *to-brast*, burst.



EVERYMAN. O all thing faileth, save God alone:  
Beauty, Strength, and Discretion;  
For when Death bloweth his blast,  
They all run from me full fast.

FIVE-WITS. Everyman, my leave now of thee I  
take.

I will follow the other, for here I thee forsake.

EVERYMAN. Alas! then may I wail and weep,  
For I took you for my best friend.

FIVE-WITS. I will no longer thee keep.  
Now farewell, and there an end.

[*Exit FIVE-WITS.*]

EVERYMAN. O Jesu, help, all hath forsaken me!

GOOD-DEEDS. Nay, Everyman, I will bide with thee,  
I will not forsake thee indeed;  
Thou shalt find me a good friend at need.

EVERYMAN. Gramercy, Good-Deeds; now may I true  
friends see;  
They have forsaken me every one;  
I loved them better than my Good-Deeds alone.  
Knowledge, will ye forsake me also?

KNOWLEDGE. Yea, Everyman, when ye to death shall  
go:  
But not yet for no manner of danger.

EVERYMAN. Gramercy, Knowledge, with all my heart.

KNOWLEDGE. Nay, yet I will not from hence depart,  
Till I see where ye shall be come.

EVERYMAN. Me-thinketh, alas, that I must be gone,  
To make my reckoning and my debts pay,  
For I see my time is nigh spent away.  
Take example, all ye that this do hear or see,  
How they that I love best do forsake me,  
Except my Good-Deeds that bideth truly.

GOOD-DEEDS. All earthly things is but vanity:  
Beauty, Strength, and Discretion, do man forsake;  
Foolish friends and kinsmen, that fair spake.  
All fleeth save Good-Deeds, and that am I.

EVERYMAN. Have mercy on me, God most mighty;  
And stand by me, thou Mother and Maid, holy Mary.

GOOD-DEEDS. Fear not, I will speak for thee.

EVERYMAN. Here I cry God mercy.

GOOD-DEEDS. Short our end, and minish our pain;  
Let us go and never come again.

EVERYMAN. Into thy hands, Lord, my soul I commend;  
Receive it, Lord, that it be not lost;  
As thou me boughtest, so me defend,  
And save me from the fiend's boast,  
That I may appear with that blessed host  
That shall be saved at the day of doom.  
*In manus tuas* of mights the most  
For ever *commendo spiritum meum*.<sup>17</sup>

KNOWLEDGE. Now hath he suffered that we all shall  
endure;  
The Good-Deeds shall make all sure.  
Now hath he made ending;  
Methinketh that I hear angels sing  
And make great joy and melody,  
Where Everyman's soul received shall be.

[*An ANGEL appears.*]

THE ANGEL. Come, excellent elect spouse to Jesu:  
Here above thou shalt go  
Because of thy singular virtue:  
Now the soul is taken the body fro;  
Thy reckoning is crystal-clear.  
Now shalt thou into the heavenly sphere,  
Unto the which all ye shall come  
That liveth well before the day of doom.

DOCTOR. This moral men may have in mind;  
Ye hearers, take it of worth, old and young,  
And forsake pride, for he deceiveth you in the end,

---

<sup>17</sup> "Into thy hands, I commend my spirit."

And remember Beauty, Five-Wits, Strength, and Dis-  
cretion,  
They all at the last do Everyman forsake.  
Save his Good-Deeds there doth he take.  
But beware, an they be small,  
Before God, he hath no help at all.  
None excuse may be there for Everyman:  
Alas, how shall he do them?  
For after death amends may no man make,  
For then mercy and pity doth him forsake.  
If his reckoning be not clear, when he doth come,  
God will say, *Ite, maledicti, in ignem eternum*.<sup>18</sup>  
And he that hath his account whole and sound,  
High in heaven he shall be crowned.  
Unto which place God bring us all thither  
That we may live body and soul together.  
Thereto help the Trinity,  
Amen, say ye, for saint charity.

## FINIS

*Thus endeth this moral play of Everyman. Imprinted at  
London in Paul's Churchyard by me John Skot.*

---

<sup>18</sup> "Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire."

THE TRAGICAL HISTORY OF  
DOCTOR FAUSTUS  
BY  
CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE  
(c. 1588)



## INTRODUCTION

Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* (c. 1588) holds an enduring place among the tragic masterpieces of Elizabethan Drama. Unlike the other dramas in this collection, *Dr. Faustus* is primarily dramatic and secondarily philosophic in appeal. It is not to be thought that Marlowe's main intent in writing *Dr. Faustus* was to present a philosophy, but rather to write a popular and moving tragedy for the competitive theater of his day.

He chose a figure that has become world famous in opera and drama through the Faust depicted by Goethe, Germany's greatest poet-philosopher and seer. Strangely enough Goethe did not draw directly upon Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*; and traces of its influence are extremely slight. Nevertheless, through the work of these poets, Dr. Faustus has become the Medieval and Renaissance antagonist of Heaven, as Job is the Hebrew antagonist, and Prometheus, the Greek. All three strive to wrest from the universe its hidden meanings, and to solve the riddle of man and his destiny.

Faustus, a magician of obscure origin, was a familiar figure in German popular folklore before Marlowe drew upon the *Faustbuch* for his drama. Some elements of this legend reach back to early Medieval times, and, perhaps, to Simon Magus, the magician of the Bible. The atmosphere of Marlowe's play is essentially Medieval and Renaissance. Medieval Christianity recognized the personification of the evil forces of the world in the Devil working for the destruction of the soul of man, and like God, possessed of supernatural powers.

It is hard for those of us who accept with enthusiasm the results of scientific research and invention, to realize the horror with which the Middle Ages regarded the alchemists who experimented with Nature to discover knowledge instead of resting in unquestioning faith (like Everyman) upon the vision, grace, and mercy of God. They were popularly con-

sidered "the conscious agents of the Evil one." The Medieval Everyman is content to lose the whole world to gain his own soul; Dr. Faustus, boldly taking all knowledge for his province, is willing to sell his soul to the Devil to gain the whole world. This daring Renaissance spirit, fearlessly pagan in its philosophic speculation, plunges with renewed zeal into Medieval science, astrology, alchemy, and necromancy, into dangerous experiments with black magic and cabalistic books, all of which belong to the supernatural realm of Lucifer. Having searched in vain through the Greek and Christian philosophers for the secret of life, Faustus turns to magic in the hope of achieving a power over the forces of earth, equal to that of God in Heaven. In vain does the Good Angel warn him to turn rather to the Bible, but at the urgency of the Evil Angel (Scene III), he conjures up instead Mephistopheles, whom he bids to clothe himself as a Franciscan friar, since "a holy shape becomes a devil best." Faustus then sells his soul to Mephistopheles in return for twenty-four years of voluptuous living. In Scene V Faustus is seen wavering and regretting his action. He again repudiates the Good Angel, summons Mephistopheles and reaffirms his oath in blood. In return he receives the power to make himself invisible, to command Mephistopheles at will, and to change into any shape he pleases. In spite of the Good Angel's repeated warnings (Scene VI), he resolves never to repent. Under Mephistopheles' tutelage he studies the secrets of the universe, witnesses, to his great delight, Lucifer's display of the Seven Deadly Sins (spectacular figures in the old Morality plays), and looks forward to visiting Hell.

Faustus next tours Europe with Mephistopheles to try out his magic powers (Scene VII). He uses them in silly and preposterous ways: to play servile tricks upon the Pope, to stage a supernatural hoax at the court of Emperor Charles V (Scene X), or to play crude practical jokes upon the yokels of his own village. Then, in spite of waverings as the day of reckoning approaches, Faustus confirms once more his vow to Lucifer, and demands the greatest voluptuous experience his imagination can conceive, union with Helen of Troy, the most beautiful woman of antiquity. His ecstasy at her appearance is revealed in the memorable poetic passage:



"Was this the face that launch'd a thousand ships,  
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?  
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss."

Then follows quickly the final scene of distraction, terror, and damnation as the clock strikes twelve and the Devils drag Faustus, vainly appealing to God, off to Hell and eternal punishment for his presumption in meddling with unlawful things and "practicing more than Heavenly power permits." Man should not strive to partake of the wisdom reserved for divinity, but unquestioningly believe.

That Marlowe lacked Shakespeare's genius for comedy is evident by his woeful attempts in such burlesque scenes as VIII, and IX, which, though doubtless pleasing to the groundlings of the pit, mar the mood of the Faust story, and "make the judicious grieve."

The final soliloquy of Dr. Faustus should be remembered, however, as an example of the magnificence for which Marlowe's blank verse is famous in Elizabethan drama, for in poetic power Marlowe was second only to Shakespeare.



TEXT OF THE PLAY

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

THE POPE.

CARDINAL OF LORRAINE.

THE EMPEROR OF GERMANY.

DUKE OF VANHOLT.

FAUSTUS.

VALDES, } *friends to* FAUSTUS.  
CORNELIUS, }

WAGNER, *servant to* FAUSTUS.

CLOWN.

ROBIN.

RALPH.

VINTNER.

HORSE-COURSER.

A KNIGHT.

AN OLD MAN.

SCHOLARS, FRIARS, *and* ATTENDANTS.

DUCHESS OF VANHOLT.

LUCIFER.

BELZEBUB

MEPHISTOPHILIS.

GOOD ANGEL.

EVIL ANGEL.

THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS.

DEVILS.

*Spirits in the shapes of* ALEXANDER THE GREAT,  
*of his* PARAMOUR, *and of* HELEN.

CHORUS.

## THE TRAGICAL HISTORY OF DOCTOR FAUSTUS

[*Enter* CHORUS.]

CHORUS. Not marching now in fields of Thrasimene,  
Where Mars did mate <sup>1</sup> the Carthaginians;  
Nor sporting in the dalliance of love;  
In courts of kings where state is overturn'd;  
Nor in the pomp of proud audacious deeds,  
Intends our Muse to vaunt his heavenly verse:  
Only this, gentlemen,—we must perform  
The form of Faustus' fortunes, good or bad:  
To patient judgements we appeal our plaud,<sup>2</sup>  
And speak for Faustus in his infancy.  
Now is he born, his parents base of stock,  
In Germany, within a town call'd Rhodes:  
Of riper years, to Wittenberg he went,  
Whereas his kinsmen chiefly brought him up.  
So soon he profits in divinity,  
The fruitful plot of scholarism grac'd,  
That shortly he was grac'd with doctor's name,  
Excelling all whose sweet delight disputes  
In heavenly matters of theology;  
Till swoln with cunning, of a self-conceit,  
His waxen wings did mount above his reach,  
And, melting, heavens conspir'd his overthrow;  
For, falling to a devilish exercise,  
And glutted now with learning's golden gifts,  
He surfeits upon cursèd necromancy;

---

<sup>1</sup> Confound.

<sup>2</sup> Ask for applause.

Nothing so sweet as magic is to him,  
Which he prefers before his chiefest bliss:  
And this the man that in his study sits.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE I. *Faustus's Study.*

[*FAUSTUS discovered.*]

FAUSTUS. Settle thy studies, Faustus, and begin  
To sound the depth of that thou wilt profess: <sup>3</sup>  
Having commenc'd, be a divine in show,  
Yet level at the end of every art,  
And live and die in Aristotle's works.  
Sweet Analytics, 'tis thou hast ravish'd me!  
*Bene disserere est finis logices.*  
Is, to dispute well, logic's chiefest end?  
Affords this art no greater miracle?  
Then read no more; thou hast attain'd that end.  
A greater subject fitteth Faustus' wit:  
Bid Economy farewell, and Galen come,  
Seeing, *Ubi desinit philosophus, ibi incipit medicus*: <sup>4</sup>  
Be a physician, Faustus; heap up gold,  
And be etèrniz'd for some wondrous cure!  
*Summum bonum medicinae sanitas:*  
The end of physie is our body's health.  
Why, Faustus, hast thou not attain'd that end?  
Is not thy common talk found aphorisms?  
Are not thy bills hung up as monuments,  
Whereby whole cities have escap'd the plague,  
And thousand desp'rate maladies been eas'd?  
Yet art thou still but Faustus, and a man.  
Couldst thou make men to live eternally,  
Or, being dead, raise them to life again.  
Then this profession were to be esteem'd.  
Physic, farewell! Where is Justinian?

[*Reads.*]

---

<sup>3</sup> Teach, as a professor.

<sup>4</sup> "Where the philosopher stops, there the physician begins."

*Si una eademque res legatur duobus, alter rem, alter valorem rei, &c.*<sup>5</sup>

A pretty case of paltry legacies!

*Exhaereditare filium non potest pater, nisi, &c.*<sup>6</sup>

Such is the subject of the institute,

And universal body of the law:

His study fits a mercenary drudge,

Who aims at nothing but external trash;

Too servile and illiberal for me.

When all is done, divinity is best:

Jerome's Bible,<sup>7</sup> Faustus; view it well.

[Reads.]

*Stipendium peccati mors est. Ha! Stipendium, &c.*

The reward of sin is death: that's hard.

[Reads.]

*Si peccasse negamus, fallimur, et nulla est in nobis veritas:*

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and there's  
no truth in us.

Why, then, belike we must sin, and so consequently die:

Aye, we must die an everlasting death.

What doctrine call you this, *Che sera, sera:*

What will be, shall be? Divinity, adieu!

These metaphysics of magicians,

And necromantic books are heavenly;

Lines, circles, scenes, letters, and characters;

Aye, these are those that Faustus most desires.

O, what a world of profit and delight,

Of power, of honor, of omnipotence,

Is promis'd to the studious artizan!

All things that move between the quiet poles

Shall be at my command: emperors and kings

Are but obey'd in their several provinces,

Nor can they raise the wind, or rend the clouds;

But his dominion that exceeds in this,

Stretcheth as far as doth the mind of man;

<sup>5</sup> "If one and the same thing is bequeathed to two persons, one receives the thing, the other the value of the thing."

<sup>6</sup> "The father cannot disinherit the son, unless," etc.

<sup>7</sup> The vulgate, or Latin Bible.



A sound magician is a mighty god:  
Here, Faustus, tire <sup>8</sup> thy brains to gain a deity!

[*Enter WAGNER.*]

Wagner, commend me to my dearest friends,  
The German Valdes and Cornelius;  
Request them earnestly to visit me.

WAGNER. I will, sir.

[*Exit.*]

FAUSTUS. Their conference will be a greater help to me  
Than all my labors, plod I ne'er so fast.

[*Enter GOOD ANGEL and EVIL ANGEL.*]

GOOD ANGEL. O, Faustus, lay that damnèd book aside,  
And gaze not on it, lest it tempt thy soul,  
And heap God's heavy wrath upon thy head!  
Read, read the Scriptures:—that is blasphemy.

EVIL ANGEL. Go forward, Faustus, in that famous art  
Wherein all Nature's treasure is contained:

Be thou on earth as Jove is in the sky,

Lord and commander of these elements. [*Exeunt Angels.*]

FAUSTUS. How am I gluttèd with conceit of this! <sup>9</sup>  
Shall I make spirits fetch me what I please.

Resolve me of all ambiguities,

Perform what desperate enterprise I will?

I'll have them fly to India for gold,

Ransack the ocean for orient pearl,

And search all corners of the new-found world

For pleasant fruits and princely delicates;

I'll have them read me strange philosophy,

And tell the secrets of all foreign kings;

I'll have them wall all Germany with brass,

And make swift Rhine circle fair Wittenberg;

I'll have them fill the public schools with silk,

Wherewith the students shall be bravely clad;

I'll levy soldiers with the coin they bring,

---

<sup>8</sup> Try?

<sup>9</sup> How I am filled with this idea.

And chase the Prince of Parma from our land,  
And reign sole king of all our provinces;  
Yea, stranger engines for the brunt of war,  
Than was the fiery keel at Antwerp's bridge,  
I'll make my servile spirits to invent.

[*Enter VALDES and CORNELIUS.*]

Come, German Valdes, and Cornelius,  
And make me blest with your sage conference!  
Valdes, sweet Valdes, and Cornelius,  
Know that your words have won me at the last  
To practice magic and concealèd arts:  
Yet not your words only, but mine own fantasy,  
That will receive no object; for my head  
But ruminates on necromantic skill.  
Philosophy is odious and obscure;  
Both law and physic are for petty wits;  
Divinity is basest of the three,  
Unpleasant, harsh, contemptible, and vile:  
'Tis magic, magic, that hath ravish'd me.  
Then, gentle friends, aid me in this attempt;  
And I, that have with concise syllogisms  
Gravell'd the pastors of the German church,  
And made the flowering pride of Wittenberg  
Swarm to my problems, as the infernal spirits  
On sweet Musaeus when he came to hell,  
Will be as cunning as Agrippa was,  
Whose shadows made all Europe honor him.

VALDES. Faustus, these books, thy wit, and our experience,  
Shall make all nations to canonize us.  
As Indian Moors obey their Spanish lords,  
So shall the subjects of every element  
Be always serviceable to us three;  
Like lions shall they guard us when we please;  
Like Almain rutters <sup>10</sup> with their horsemen's staves,

---

<sup>10</sup> German riders.

Or Lapland giants, trotting by our sides;  
Sometimes like women, or unwedded maids,  
Shadowing more beauty in their airy brows  
Than have the white breasts of the queen of love:  
From Venice shall they drag huge argosies,  
And from America the golden fleece  
That yearly stuffs old Philip's treasury;  
If learnèd Faustus will be resolute.

FAUSTUS. Valdes, as resolute am I in this  
As thou to live: therefore object it not.

CORNELIUS. The miracles that magic will perform  
Will make thee vow to study nothing else.  
He that is grounded in astrology,  
Enrich'd with tongues, well seen in minerals,  
Hath all the principles magic doth require:  
Then doubt not, Faustus, but to be renown'd,  
And more frequented for this mystery  
Than heretofore the Delphian oracle.  
The spirits tell me they can dry the sea,  
And fetch the treasure of all foreign wrecks,  
Aye, all the wealth that our forefathers hid  
Within the massy entrails of the earth:  
Then tell me, Faustus, what shall we three want?

FAUSTUS. Nothing, Cornelius. O, this cheers my soul!  
Come, show me some demonstrations magical,  
That I may conjure in some lusty grove,  
And have these joys in full possession.

VALDES. Then haste thee to some solitary grove,  
And bear wise Bacon's and Albanus' works,  
The Hebrew Psalter, and New Testament;  
And whatsoever else is requisite  
We will inform thee ere our conference cease.

CORNELIUS. Valdes, first let him know the words of art;  
And then, all other ceremonies learn'd,  
Faustus may try his cunning by himself.

VALDES. First I'll instruct thee in the rudiments,  
And then wilt thou be perfecter than I.

FAUSTUS. Then come and dine with me, and, after meat,  
We'll canvass every quiddity<sup>11</sup> thereof;  
For, ere I sleep, I'll try what I can do:  
This night I'll conjure, though I die therefore. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II. *Before Faustus's House.*

[Enter Two SCHOLARS.]

FIRST SCHOLAR. I wonder what's become of Faustus, that  
was wont to make our schools ring with *sic probo*.<sup>12</sup>

SECOND SCHOLAR. That shall we know; for see, here comes  
his boy.

[Enter WAGNER.]

FIRST SCHOLAR. How now, sirrah! where's thy master?

WAGNER. God in heaven knows.

SECOND SCHOLAR. Why, dost not thou know?

WAGNER. Yes, I know; but that follows not.

FIRST SCHOLAR. Go to, sirrah! leave your jesting, and tell  
us where he is.

WAGNER. That follows not necessary by force of argu-  
ment, that you, being licentiate, should stand upon't: therefore  
acknowledge your error, and be attentive.

SECOND SCHOLAR. Why, didst thou not say thou knewest?

WAGNER. Have you any witness on't?

FIRST SCHOLAR. Yes, sirrah, I heard you.

WAGNER. Ask my fellow if I be a thief.

SECOND SCHOLAR. Well, you will not tell us?

WAGNER. Yes, sir, I will tell you: yet, if you were not  
dunces, you would never ask me such a question; for is not he  
*corpus naturale*?<sup>13</sup> and is not that *mobile*? then wherefore  
should you ask me such a question? But that I am by nature  
phlegmatic, slow to wrath, it were not for you to come within

<sup>11</sup> Fine distinction from *quid est quid*, cf. He knows "What's what."

<sup>12</sup> "Thus I prove."

<sup>13</sup> *Natural body*, a term used in medieval physics.

forty foot of the place of execution, although I do not doubt to see you both hanged the next sessions. Thus having triumphed over you, I will set my countenance like a precision, and begin to speak thus:—Truly, my dear brethren, my master is within at dinner, with Valdes and Cornelius, as this wine, if it could speak, it would inform your worships: and so, the Lord bless you, preserve you, and keep you, my dear brethren, my dear brethren! [Exit.]

FIRST SCHOLAR. Nay, then, I fear he is fallen into that damned art for which they too are infamous through the world.

SECOND SCHOLAR. Were he a stranger, and not allied to me, yet should I grieve for him. But, come, let us go and inform the Rector, and see if he by his grave counsel can reclaim him.

FIRST SCHOLAR. O, but I fear me nothing can reclaim him!

SECOND SCHOLAR. Yet let us try what we can do.

[Exeunt.]

### SCENE III. A Grove.

[Enter FAUSTUS to conjure.]

FAUSTUS. Now that the gloomy shadow of the earth,  
 Longing to view Orion's drizzling look,  
 Leaps from th' antarctic world unto the sky,  
 And dims the welkin with her pitchy breath,  
 Faustus, begin thine incantations,  
 And try if devils will obey thy hest,  
 Seeing thou hast pray'd and sacrific'd to them.  
 Within this circle is Jehovah's name,  
 Forward and backward anagrammatiz'd,  
 The breviated names of holy saints,  
 Figures of every adjunct to the heavens,  
 And characters of signs and erring stars,  
 By which the spirits are enforc'd to rise:  
 Then fear not, Faustus, but be resolute,  
 And try the uttermost magic can perform.—  
*Sint mihi dei Acherontis propitii! Valeat numen triplex*

*Jehovae! Ignei, aërii, aquatani spiritus, salvete! Orientis princeps Belzebub, inferni ardentis monarcha, et Demogorgon, propitiamus vos, ut appareat et surgat Mephistophilis, quod tumeraris: per Jehovah, Gehennam, et consecratam aquam quam nunc spargo, signumque crucis quod nunc facio, et per vota nostra, ipse nunc surgat nobis dictus Mephistophilis!*<sup>14</sup>

[*Enter MEPHISTOPHILIS.*]

I charge thee to return, and change thy shape;  
Thou art too ugly to attend on me:  
Go, and return an old Franciscan friar;  
That holy shape becomes a devil best.

[*Exit MEPHISTOPHILIS.*]

I see there's virtue in my heavenly words:  
Who would not be proficient in this art?  
How pliant is this Mephistophilis,  
Full of obedience and humility!  
Such is the force of magic and my spells:  
Now Faustus, thou art conjuror laureat,  
That canst command great Mephistophilis:  
*Quin regis Mephistophilis fratris imagine.*<sup>15</sup>

[*Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS like a Franciscan friar.*]

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Now, Faustus, what wouldst thou have me do?

FAUSTUS. I charge thee wait upon me whilst I live,  
To do whatever Faustus shall command,  
Be it to make the moon drop from her sphere,

---

<sup>14</sup> "May the gods of Acheron favor me! May Jehovah's threefold might prevail! Hail, spirits of fire, air, and water! Belzebub, Prince of the East, Ruler over blazing hell, and Demogorgon, we propitiate you, that Mephistophilis may appear and rise. By Jehovah, Gehenna, and the holy water which I now sprinkle, and by the sign of the cross which I now make, and by our prayer, let Mephistophilis now rise at our summons."

<sup>15</sup> "Thou rulest in the image of thy brother, Mephistophilis."



Or th' ocean to overwhelm the world.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. I am a servant to great Lucifer,  
And may not follow thee without his leave:  
No more than he commands must we perform.

FAUSTUS. Did not he charge thee to appear to me?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. No, I came hither of mine own accord.

FAUSTUS. Did not my conjuring speeches raise thee?  
speak.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. That was the cause, but yet *per accidens*:  
For, when we hear one rack<sup>16</sup> the name of God,  
Abjure the Scriptures and his Saviour Christ,  
We fly, in hope to get his glorious soul;  
Nor will we come, unless he use such means  
Whereby he is in danger to be damn'd.  
Therefore the shortest cut for conjuring  
Is stoutly to abjure the Trinity,  
And pray devoutly to the prince of hell.

FAUSTUS. So Faustus hath  
Already done; and holds this principle,  
There is no chief but only Belzebub;  
To whom Faustus doth dedicate himself.  
This word 'damnation' terrifies him not,  
For he confounds hell in Elysium:<sup>17</sup>  
His ghost be with the old philosophers!  
But, leaving these vain trifles of men's souls,  
Tell me what is that Lucifer thy lord?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Arch-regent and commander of all  
spirits.

FAUSTUS. Was not that Lucifer an angel once?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Yes, Faustus, and most dearly lov'd of  
God.

FAUSTUS. How comes it, then, that he is prince of devils?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. O, by aspiring pride and insolence;  
For which God threw him from the face of heaven.

FAUSTUS. And what are you that live with Lucifer?

<sup>16</sup> Distort.

<sup>17</sup> Makes no distinction between hell and heaven.



MEPHISTOPHILIS. Unhappy spirits that fell with Lucifer.  
Conspir'd against our God with Lucifer,  
And are for ever damn'd with Lucifer.

FAUSTUS. Where are you damn'd?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. In hell.

FAUSTUS. How comes it, then, that thou art out of hell?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Why, this is hell, nor am I out of it:  
Think'st thou that I, who saw the face of God,  
And tasted the eternal joys of heaven,  
Am not tormented with ten thousand hells,  
In being depriv'd of everlasting bliss?  
O, Faustus, leave these frivolous demands,  
Which strike a terror to my fainting soul!

FAUSTUS. What, is great Mephistophilis so passionate  
For being depriv'd of the joys of heaven?  
Learn thou of Faustus manly fortitude,  
And scorn those joys thou never shalt possess.  
Go bear these tidings to great Lucifer:  
Seeing Faustus hath incurr'd eternal death  
By desp'rate thoughts against Jove's deity,  
Say, he surrenders up to him his soul,  
So he will spare him four and twenty years, ×  
Letting him live in all voluptuousness;  
Having thee ever to attend on me,  
To give me whatsoever I shall ask,  
To tell me whatsoever I demand,  
To slay mine enemies, and aid my friends,  
And always be obedient to my will.  
Go and return to mighty Lucifer,  
And meet me in my study at midnight,  
And then resolve me of thy master's mind.\*

MEPHISTOPHILIS. I will, Faustus.

[Exit.]

FAUSTUS. Had I as many souls as there be stars,  
I'd give them all for Mephistophilis.  
By him I'll be great emp'rour of the world,  
And make a bridge thorough the moving air,  
To pass the ocean with a band of men;

I'll join the hills that bind the Afric shore,  
 And make that country continent to Spain,  
 And both contributory to my crown:  
 The Emp'rор shall not live but by my leave,  
 Nor any potentate of Germany.  
 Now that I have obtain'd what I desir'd,  
 I'll live in speculation of this art,  
 Till Mephistophilis return again.

SCENE IV. *A Street.*

[*Enter WAGNER and CLOWN.*]

WAGNER. Sirrah boy, come hither.

CLOWN. How, boy! swowns, boy! I hope you have seen many boys with such pickadevaunts<sup>18</sup> as I have: boy, quotha!

WAGNER. Tell me, sirrah, hast thou any comings in?

CLOWN. Aye, and goings out too. You may see else.

WAGNER. Alas, poor slave! see how poverty jesteth in his nakedness! the villain is bare and out of service, and so hungry, that I know he would give his soul to the devil for a shoulder of mutton, though it were blood-raw.

CLOWN. How! my soul to the devil for a shoulder of mutton, though 'twere blood-raw! not so, good friend: by'r lady, I had need have it well roasted, and good sauce to it, if I pay so dear.

WAGNER. Well, wilt thou serve me, and I'll make thee go like *Qui mihi discipulus?*

CLOWN. How, in verse?

WAGNER. No, sirrah; in beaten silk and staves-acre.

CLOWN. How, how, knaves-acre! aye, I thought that was all the land his father left him. Do ye hear? I would be sorry to rob you of your living.

WAGNER. Sirrah, I say in staves-acre.

CLOWN. Oho, oho, staves-acre! why, then, belike, if I were your man, I should be full of vermin.

---

<sup>18</sup> *pic-à-devant*, short, pointed beard.

WAGNER. So thou shalt, whether thou beest with me or no. But, sirrah, leave your jesting, and bind yourself presently unto me for seven years, or I'll turn all the lice about thee into familiars, and they shall tear thee in pieces.

CLOWN. Do you hear, sir? you may save that labour; they are too familiar with me already: swowns, they are as bold with my flesh as if they had paid for my meat and drink.

WAGNER. Well, do you hear, sirrah? hold, take these guilders. *[Gives money.]*

CLOWN. Gridirons, what be they?

WAGNER. Why, French crowns.

CLOWN. Mass, but for the name of French crowns, a man were as good have as many English counters. And what should I do with these?

WAGNER. Why, now, sirrah, thou art at an hour's warning, whensoever and wheresoever the devil shall fetch thee.

CLOWN. No, no; here, take your gridirons again.

WAGNER. Truly, I'll none of them.

CLOWN. Truly, but you shall.

WAGNER. Bear witness I gave them him.

CLOWN. Bear witness I give them you again.

WAGNER. Well, I will cause two devils presently to fetch thee away—Baliol and Belcher!

CLOWN. Let your Balio and your Belcher come here, and I'll knock them, they were never so knocked since they were devils: say I should kill one of them, what would folks say? 'Do ye see yonder tall fellow in the round slop? he has killed the devil.' So I should be called Kill-devil all the parish over.

*[Enter two DEVILS; and the CLOWN runs up and down crying.]*

WAGNER. Baliol and Belcher,—spirit, away!

*[Exeunt DEVILS.]*

CLOWN. What, are they gone? a vengeance on them! they have vile long nails. There was a he-devil and a she-devil:

I'll tell you how you shall know them; all he-devils has horns, and all she-devils has cloven feet.

WAGNER. Well, sirrah, follow me.

CLOWN. But, do you hear? if I should serve you, would you teach me to raise up Banios and Belcheos?

WAGNER. I will teach thee to turn thyself to any thing, to a dog, or a cat, or a mouse, or a rat, or any thing.

CLOWN. How! a Christian fellow to a dog, or a cat, a mouse, or a rat! no, no, sir; if you turn me into any thing, let it be into the likeness of a little pretty frisking flea, that I may be here and there and everywhere.

WAGNER. Well, sirrah, come.

CLOWN. But, do you hear, Wagner?

WAGNER. How!—Baliol and Belcher!

CLOWN. O Lord, I pray, sir, let Banio and Belcher go sleep.

WAGNER. Villain, call me Master Wagner, and let thy left eye be diametarily fixed upon my right heel, with *quasi vestigiis nostris insistere*.<sup>19</sup> [Exit.]

CLOWN. God forgive me, he speaks Dutch fustian. Well, I'll follow him; I'll serve him, that's flat. [Exit.]

#### SCENE V. *Faustus's Study.*

[FAUSTUS *discovered.*]

FAUSTUS. Now, Faustus, must  
Thou needs be damn'd, and canst thou not be sav'd:  
What boots it, then, to think of God or heaven?  
Away with such vain fancies, and despair;  
Despair in God, and trust in Belzebub:  
Now go not backward; no, Faustus, be resolute:  
Why waver'st thou? O, something soundeth in mine  
ears,  
'Abjure this magic, turn to God again!  
Aye, and Faustus will turn to God again.  
To God? he loves thee not;

---

<sup>19</sup> "As if to walk in my foot-steps."

The god thou serv'st is thine own appetite,  
Wherein is fix'd the love of Belzebub:  
To him I'll build an altar and a church,  
And offer lukewarm blood of new-born babes.

[*Enter GOOD ANGEL and EVIL ANGEL.*]

GOOD ANGEL. Sweet Faustus, leave that execrable art.

FAUSTUS. Contrition, prayer, repentance—what of them?

GOOD ANGEL. O, they are means to bring thee unto heaven!

EVIL ANGEL. Rather illusions, fruits of lunacy,  
That makes men foolish that do trust them most.

GOOD ANGEL. Sweet Faustus, think of heaven and heavenly things.

EVIL ANGEL. No, Faustus; think of honour and of wealth.

[*Exeunt ANGELS.*]

FAUSTUS. Of wealth!

Why, the signiory of Emden shall be mine.  
When Mephistophilis shall stand by me,  
What god can hurt thee, Faustus? thou art safe:  
Cast no more doubts.—Come, Mephistophilis,  
And bring glad tidings from great Lucifer;—  
Is 't not midnight?—come, Mephistophilis,  
*Veni, veni, Mephistophile!*<sup>20</sup>

[*Enter MEPHISTOPHILIS.*]

Now tell me what says Lucifer, thy lord?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. That I shall wait on Faustus while he lives,

So he will buy my service with his soul.

FAUSTUS. Already Faustus hath hazarded that for thee.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. But, Faustus, thou must bequeath it solemnly,

And write a deed of gift with thine own blood;

---

<sup>20</sup> "Come, come, Mephistophilis!"

For that security craves great Lucifer.  
If thou deny it, I will back to hell.

FAUSTUS. Stay, Mephistophilis, and tell me, what good  
Will my soul do thy lord?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Enlarge his kingdom.

FAUSTUS. Is that the reason why he tempts us thus?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. *Solamen miseris socios habuisse  
doloris.*<sup>21</sup>

FAUSTUS. Why, have you any pain that torture others?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. As great as have the human souls of  
men.

But tell me, Faustus, shall I have thy soul?

And I will be thy slave, and wait on thee,  
And give thee more than thou hast wit to ask.

FAUSTUS. Aye, Mephistophilis, I give it thee.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Then, Faustus, stab thine arm courage-  
ously,

And bind thy soul, that at some certain day  
Great Lucifer may claim it as his own;  
And then be thou as great as Lucifer.

FAUSTUS. [*Stabbing his arm*] Lo, Mephistophilis, for love  
of thee,

I cut mine arm, and with my proper blood  
Assure my soul to be great Lucifer's,  
Chief lord and regent of perpetual night!  
View here the blood that trickles from mine arm,  
And let it be propitious for my wish.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. But, Faustus, thou must  
Write it in manner of a deed of gift.

FAUSTUS. Aye, so I will [*Writes*]. But, Mephistophilis.  
My blood congeals, and I can write no more.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. I'll fetch thee fire to dissolve it straight.  
[*Exit.*]

FAUSTUS. What might the staying of my blood portend?  
Is it unwilling I should write this bill?  
Why streams it not, that I may write afresh?

---

<sup>21</sup> "Misery loves company."



*Faustus gives to thee his soul: ah, there it stay'd!*  
 Why shouldst thou not? is not thy soul thine own?  
 Then write again, *Faustus gives to thee his soul.*

[*Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS with a chafer of coals.*]

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Here's fire; come, Faustus, set it on.

FAUSTUS. So, now the blood begins to clear again;  
 Now will I make an end immediately. [Writes.]

MEPHISTOPHILIS. O, what will not I do to obtain his soul?  
 [Aside.]

FAUSTUS. *Consummatum est*; this bill is ended,  
 And Faustus hath bequeath'd his soul to Lucifer.  
 But what is this inscription on mine arm?

*Homo, fuge:*<sup>22</sup> whither should I fly?  
 If unto God, he'll throw me down to hell.  
 My senses are deceiv'd; here's nothing writ:—  
 I see it plain; here in this place is writ,

*Homo, fuge:*<sup>22</sup> whither should I fly?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. I'll fetch him somewhat to delight his  
 mind. [Aside, and then exit.]

[*Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS with DEVILS, who give crowns and  
 rich apparel to FAUSTUS, dance, and then depart.*]

FAUSTUS. Speak, Mephistophilis, what means this show?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Nothing, Faustus, but to delight thy mind  
 withal,

And to show thee what magic can perform.

FAUSTUS. But may I raise up spirits when I please?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Aye, Faustus, and do greater things than  
 these.

FAUSTUS. Then there's enough for a thousand souls.  
 Here, Mephistophilis, receive this scroll,  
 A deed of gift of body and of soul:  
 But yet conditionally that thou perform  
 All articles prescrib'd between us both.

---

<sup>22</sup> "Fly, man."



MEPHISTOPHILIS. Faustus, I swear by hell and Lucifer  
To effect all promises between us made!

FAUSTUS. Then hear me read them. [Reads.]

*On these conditions following. First, that Faustus may be a spirit in form and substance. Secondly, that Mephistophilis shall be his servant, and at his command. Thirdly, that Mephistophilis shall do for him, and bring him whatsoever [he desires]. Fourthly, that he shall be in his chamber or house invisible. Lastly, that he shall appear to the said John Faustus, at all times, in what form or shape soever he please. I, John Faustus, of Wittenberg, Doctor, by these presents, do give both body and soul to Lucifer prince of the east, and his minister Mephistophilis; and furthermore grant unto them that, twenty-four years being expired, the articles above written inviolate, full power to fetch or carry the said John Faustus, body and soul, flesh, blood, or goods, into their habitation wheresoever. By me, JOHN FAUSTUS.*

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Speak, Faustus, do you deliver this as your deed?

FAUSTUS. Aye, take it, and the devil give thee good on't.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Now, Faustus, ask what thou wilt.

FAUSTUS. First will I question with thee about hell.  
Tell me, where is the place that men call hell?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Under the heavens.

FAUSTUS. Aye, but whereabout?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Within the bowels of these elements,  
Where we are tortur'd and remain for ever:  
Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscrib'd  
In one self place; for where we are is hell,  
And where hell is, there must we ever be:  
And, to conclude, when all the world dissolves,  
And every creature shall be purified,  
All places shall be hell that are not heaven.

FAUSTUS. Come, I think hell's a fable.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Aye, think so still, till experience change thy mind.

FAUSTUS. Why, think'st thou, then, that Faustus shall be damn'd?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Aye, of necessity, for here's the scroll  
Wherein thou hast given thy soul to Lucifer.

FAUSTUS. Aye, and body too: but what of that?  
Think'st thou that Faustus is so fond<sup>23</sup> to imagine  
That, after this life, there is any pain?  
Tush, these are trifles and mere old wives' tales.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. But, Faustus, I am an instance to prove  
the contrary;  
For I am damnèd, and am now in hell.

FAUSTUS. How! now in hell!  
Nay, an this be hell, I'll willingly be damn'd here:  
What! walking, disputing, &c.  
But, leaving off this, let me have a wife,  
The fairest maid in Germany.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. How! a wife!  
I prithee, Faustus, talk not of a wife.

FAUSTUS. Nay, sweet Mephistophilis, fetch me one; for I  
will have one.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Well, thou wilt have one? Sit there till  
I come:  
I'll fetch thee a wife in the devil's name. [Exit.]

[Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS with a DEVIL drest like a WOMAN,  
with fireworks.]

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Tell me, Faustus, how dost thou like thy  
wife?

FAUSTUS. A plague on her!

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Tut, Faustus,  
Marriage is but a ceremonial toy;  
If thou lovest me, think no more of it.  
She whom thine eyes shall like, thy heart shall have,  
Be she as chaste as was Penelope,

---

<sup>23</sup> Foolish.

As wise as Saba,<sup>24</sup> or as beautiful  
 As was bright Lucifer before his fall.  
 Hold, take this book, peruse it thoroughly: [Gives book.]  
 The iterating of these lines brings gold;  
 The framing of this circle on the ground  
 Brings whirlwinds, tempests, thunder, and lightning;  
 Pronounce this thrice devoutly to thyself,  
 And men in armour shall appear to thee,  
 Ready to execute what thou desir'st.

FAUSTUS. Thanks, Mephistophilis; yet fain would I have  
 a book wherein I might behold all spells and incantations, that  
 I might raise up spirits when I please.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Here they are in this book.

[Turns to them.]

FAUSTUS. Now would I have a book where I might see  
 all characters and planets of the heavens, that I might know  
 their motions and dispositions.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Here they are too. [Turns to them.]

FAUSTUS. Nay, let me have one book more,—and then I  
 have done,—wherein I might see all plants, herbs, and trees,  
 that grow upon the earth.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Here they be.

FAUSTUS. O, thou art deceived.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Tut, I warrant thee. [Turns to them.]

#### SCENE VI. *In the House of Faustus.*

FAUSTUS. When I behold the heavens, then I repent,  
 And curse thee, wicked Mephistophilis,  
 Because thou hast depriv'd me of those joys.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Why, Faustus,  
 Thinkest thou heaven is such a glorious thing?  
 I tell thee, 'tis not half so fair as thou,  
 Or any man that breathes on earth.

FAUSTUS. How prov'st thou that?

---

<sup>24</sup> Sheba.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. 'Twas made for man, therefore is man more excellent.

FAUSTUS. If it were made for man, 'twas made for me: I will renounce this magic and repent.

[*Enter GOOD ANGEL and EVIL ANGEL.*]

GOOD ANGEL. Faustus, repent; yet God will pity thee.

EVIL ANGEL. Thou art a spirit; God cannot pity thee.

FAUSTUS. Who buzzeth in mine ears I am a spirit?

Be I a devil, yet God may pity me;

Aye, God will pity me, if I repent.

EVIL ANGEL. Aye, but Faustus never shall repent.

[*Exeunt ANGELS.*]

FAUSTUS. My heart's so harden'd, I cannot repent:  
Scarce can I name salvation, faith, or heaven,  
But fearful echoes thunder in mine ears,  
'Faustus, thou art damn'd!' Then swords, and knives,  
Poison, guns, halters, and envenom'd steel  
Are laid before me to dispatch myself;  
And long ere this I should have slain myself,  
Had not sweet pleasure conquer'd deep despair.  
Have not I made blind Homer sing to me  
Of Alexander's love and Oenon's death?  
And hath not he, that built the walls of Thebes  
With ravishing sound of his melodious harp,  
Made music with my Mephistophilis?  
Why should I die, then, or basely despair?  
I am resolv'd; Faustus shall ne'er repent.—  
Come, Mephistophilis, let us dispute again,  
And argue of divine astrology.  
Tell me, are there many heavens above the moon?  
Are all celestial bodies but one globe,  
As is the substance of this centric earth?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. As are the elements, such are the  
spheres,  
Mutually folded in each other's orb,

And, Faustus,  
 All jointly move upon one axletree,  
 Whose terminine is term'd the world's wide pole;  
 Nor are the names of Saturn, Mars, or Jupiter  
 Feign'd, but are erring stars.

FAUSTUS. But, tell me, have they all one motion, both *situ et tempore*?<sup>25</sup>

MEPHISTOPHILIS. All jointly move from east to west in twenty-four hours upon the poles of the world; but differ in their motion upon the poles of the zodiac.

FAUSTUS. Tush,  
 These slender trifles Wagner can decide:  
 Hath Mephistophilis no greater skill?  
 Who knows not the double motion of the planets?  
 The first is finish'd in a natural day;  
 The second thus: as Saturn in thirty years; Jupiter in twelve;  
 Mars in four; the Sun, Venus, and Mercury in a year; the  
 Moon in twenty-eight days. Tush, these are freshmen's sup-  
 positions. But, tell me, hath every sphere a dominion or  
*intelligentia*?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Aye.

FAUSTUS. How many heavens or spheres are there?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Nine; the seven planets, the firmament,  
 and the empyreal heaven.

FAUSTUS. Well, resolve me in this question: why have we  
 not conjunctions, oppositions, aspects, eclipses, all at one time,  
 but in some years we have more, in some less?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. *Per inaequalem motum respectu totius.*<sup>26</sup>

FAUSTUS. Well, I am answered. Tell me who made the  
 world?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. I will not.

FAUSTUS. Sweet Mephistophilis, tell me.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Move me not, for I will not tell thee.

FAUSTUS. Villain, have I not bound thee to tell me any  
 thing?

<sup>25</sup> "In direction and time."

<sup>26</sup> "Because of their unequal motion in respect to the whole."

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Aye, that is not against our kingdom; but this is. Think thou on hell, Faustus, for thou art damned.

[*Re-enter GOOD ANGEL and EVIL ANGEL.*]

GOOD ANGEL. Think, Faustus, upon God that made the world.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Remember this. [Exit.]

FAUSTUS. Aye, go, accursèd spirit, to ugly hell!  
'Tis thou hast damn'd distressèd Faustus' soul.  
Is 't not too late?

EVIL ANGEL. Too late.

GOOD ANGEL. Never too late, if Faustus can repent.

EVIL ANGEL. If thou repent, devils shall tear thee in pieces.

GOOD ANGEL. Repent, and they shall never raze thy skin.  
[*Exeunt ANGELS.*]

FAUSTUS. Aye, Christ, my Saviour,  
Seek to save distressèd Faustus' soul!

[*Enter LUCIFER, BELZEBUB, and MEPHISTOPHILIS.*]

LUCIFER. Christ cannot save thy soul, for he is just;  
There's none but I have int'rest in the same.

FAUSTUS. O, who art thou that look'st so terrible?

LUCIFER. I am Lucifer,  
And this is my companion-prince in hell.

FAUSTUS. O, Faustus, they are come to fetch away thy soul!

LUCIFER. We come to tell thee thou dost injure us;  
Thou talk'st of Christ, contráry to thy promise:  
Thou shouldst not think of God: think of the devil,  
And of his dam too.

FAUSTUS. Nor will I henceforth: pardon me in this,  
And Faustus vows never to look to heaven,  
Never to name God, or to pray to him,  
To burn his Scriptures, slay his ministers,  
And make my spirits pull his churches down.



LUCIFER. Do so, and we will highly gratify thee. Faustus, we have come from hell to show thee some pastime: sit down, and thou shalt see all the Seven Deadly Sins appear in their proper shapes.

FAUSTUS. That sight will be as pleasing unto me, As Paradise was to Adam, the first day Of his creation.

LUCIFER. Talk not of Paradise nor creation; but mark this show: talk of the devil, and nothing else.—Come away!

[*Enter the SEVEN DEADLY SINS.*]

Now, Faustus, examine them of their several names and dispositions.

FAUSTUS. What art thou, the first?

PRIDE. I am Pride. I disdain to have any parents. I am like Ovid's flea; I can creep into every corner; sometimes, like a periwig, I sit upon a wench's brow; or, like a fan of feathers, I kiss her lips. But, fie, what a scent is here! I'll not speak another word, except the ground were perfumed, and covered with cloth of arras.

FAUSTUS. What art thou, the second?

COVETOUSNESS. I am Covetousness; and, might I have my wish, I would desire that this house and all the people in it were turned to gold, that I might lock you up in my good chest, O my sweet gold!

FAUSTUS. What art thou, the third?

WRATH. I am Wrath. I had neither father nor mother: I leapt out of a lion's mouth when I was scarce half-an-hour old; and ever since I have run up and down the world with this case of rapiers, wounding myself when I had nobody to fight withal. I was born in hell; and look to it, for some of you shall be my father.

FAUSTUS. What art thou, the fourth?

ENVY. I am Envy, born of a chimney-sweeper and an oyster-wife. I cannot read, and therefore wish all books were burnt. I am lean with seeing others eat. O, that there would



come a famine through all the world, that all might die, and I live alone! then thou shouldst see how fat I would be. But must thou sit, and I stand? come down, with a vengeance!

FAUSTUS. Away, envious rascal!—What art thou, the fifth?

GLUTTONY. Who I, sir? I am Gluttony. My parents are all dead, and the devil a penny they have left me, but a bare pension, and that is thirty meals a-day and ten bevers,—a small trifle to suffice nature. O, I come of a royal parentage! my grandfather was a Gammon of Bacon, my grandmother a Hogshead of Claret-wine; my godfathers were these, Peter Pickle-herring and Martin Martlemas-beef; O, but my godmother, she was a jolly gentlewoman, and well beloved in every good town and city; her name was Mistress Margery March-beer. Now, Faustus, thou hast heard all my progeny; wilt thou bid me to supper?

FAUSTUS. No, I'll see thee hanged; thou wilt eat up all my victuals.

GLUTTONY. Then the devil choke thee!

FAUSTUS. Choke thyself, glutton!—What art thou, the sixth?

SLOTH. I am Sloth. I was born on a sunny bank, where I have lain ever since; and you have done me great injury to bring me from thence: let me be carried thither again by Gluttony and Lechery. I'll not speak another word for a king's ransom.

FAUSTUS. What are you, Mistress Minx, the seventh and last?

LECHERY. Who, I, sir? The first letter of my name begins with Lechery.

LUCIFER. Away, to hell, to hell! [*Exeunt the SINS.*]  
Now, Faustus, how dost thou like this?

FAUSTUS. O, this feeds my soul!

LUCIFER. Tut, Faustus, in hell is all manner of delight.

FAUSTUS. O, might I see hell, and return again,  
How happy were I then!

LUCIFER. Thou shalt; I will send for thee at midnight.  
In meantime take this book; peruse it thoroughly,

And thou shalt turn thyself into what shape thou wilt.

FAUSTUS. Great thanks, mighty Lucifer!

This will I keep as chary as my life.

LUCIFER. Farewell, Faustus, and think on the devil.

FAUSTUS. Farewell, great Lucifer. Come, Mephistophilis.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

[*Enter CHORUS.*]

CHORUS. Learnèd Faustus,  
To know the secrets of astronomy  
Graven in the book of Jove's high firmament.  
Did mount himself to scale Olympus' top,  
Being seated in a chariot burning bright,  
Drawn by the strength of yoky dragons' necks.  
He now is gone to prove cosmography,  
And, as I guess, will first arrive at Rome,  
To see the Pope and manner of his court,  
And take some part of holy Peter's feast,  
That to this day is highly solemniz'd.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE VII. *The Pope's Privy-Chamber.*

[*Enter FAUSTUS and MEPHISTOPHILIS.*]

FAUSTUS. Having now, my good Mephistophilis,  
Pass'd with delight the stately town of Trier,  
Environ'd round with airy mountain-tops,  
With walls of flint, and deep-entrenchèd lakes,  
Not to be won by any conquering prince;  
From Paris next, coasting the realm of France,  
We saw the river Maine fall into Rhine,  
Whose banks are set with groves of fruitful vines;  
Then up to Naples, rich Campania,  
Whose buildings fair and gorgeous to the eye,  
The streets straight forth, and pav'd with finest brick,  
Quarter the town in four equivalents;

There saw we learnèd Maro's golden tomb,  
The way he cut, an English mile in length,  
Thorough a rock of stone, in one night's space;  
From thence to Venice, Padua, and the rest,  
In one of which a sumptuous temple stands,  
That threatens the stars with her aspiring top.  
Thus hitherto hath Faustus spent his time  
But tell me now what resting-place is this?  
Hast thou, as erst I did command,  
Conducted me within the walls of Rome?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Faustus, I have; and, because we will not be unprovided, I have taken up his Holiness' privy-chamber for our use.

FAUSTUS. I hope his Holiness will bid us welcome.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Tut, 'tis no matter, man; we'll be bold with his good cheer.

And now, my Faustus, that thou may'st perceive  
What Rome containeth to delight thee with,  
Know that this city stands upon seven hills  
That underprop the groundwork of the same:  
Just through the midst runs flowing Tiber's stream,  
With winding banks that cut it in two parts;  
Over the which four stately bridges lean,  
That make safe passage to each part of Rome:  
Upon the bridge call'd Ponte Angelo  
Erected is a castle passing strong,  
Within whose walls such store of ordnance are,  
And double cannons fram'd of carvèd brass,  
As match the days within one complète year;  
Besides the gates, and high pyramids,  
Which Julius Caesar brought from Africa.

FAUSTUS. Now, by the kingdoms of infernal rule,  
Of Styx, of Acheron, and the fiery lake  
Of ever-burning Phlegethon, I swear  
That I do long to see the monuments  
And situation of bright-splendent Rome:  
Come, therefore, let's away.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Nay, Faustus, stay: I know you'd fain  
 see the Pope,  
 And take some part of holy Peter's feast,  
 Where thou shalt see a troop of bald-pate friars,  
 Whose *summum bonum* is in belly-cheer.

FAUSTUS. Well, I'm content to compass then some sport,  
 And by their folly make us merriment.  
 Then charm me, that I  
 May be invisible, to do what I please,  
 Unseen of any whilst I stay in Rome.

[MEPHISTOPHILIS *charms him.*]

MEPHISTOPHILIS. So, Faustus; now  
 Do what thou wilt, thou shalt not be discern'd.

[*Sound a Sennet. Enter the POPE and the CARDINAL OF LORRAINE to the banquet, with FRIARS attending.*]

POPE. My Lord of Lorraine, will't please you draw  
 near?

FAUSTUS. Fall to, and the devil choke you, an you spare!

POPE. How now! who's that which spake?—Friars, look  
 about.

FIRST FRIAR. Here's nobody, if it like your Holiness.

POPE. My lord, here is a dainty dish was sent me from the  
 Bishop of Milan.

FAUSTUS. I thank you, sir. [*Snatches the dish.*]

POPE. How now! who's that which snatched the meat from  
 me? will no man look?—My lord, this dish was sent me from  
 the Cardinal of Florence.

FAUSTUS. You say true; I'll ha't. [*Snatches the dish.*]

POPE. What, again?—My lord, I'll drink to your grace.

FAUSTUS. I'll pledge your grace. [*Snatches the cup.*]

CARDINAL OF LORRAINE. My lord, it may be some ghost,  
 newly crept out of Purgatory, come to beg a pardon of your  
 Holiness.

POPE. It may be so.—Friars, prepare a dirge to lay the fury of this ghost.—Once again, my lord, fall to.

[*The POPE crosses himself.*]

FAUSTUS. What, are you crossing of yourself?  
Well, use that trick no more, I would advise you.

[*The POPE crosses himself again.*]

Well, there's the second time. Aware the third;  
I give you fair warning.

[*The POPE crosses himself again, and FAUSTUS hits him a box of the ear; and they all run away.*]

Come on, Mephistophilis; what shall we do?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Nay, I know not: we shall be cursed with bell, book, and candle.

FAUSTUS. How! bell, book, and candle,—candle, book, and bell,—

Forward and backward, to curse Faustus to hell!

Anon you shall hear a hog grunt, a calf bleat, and an ass  
bray,

Because it is Saint Peter's holiday.

[*Re-enter all the FRIARS to sing the Dirge.*]

FIRST FRIAR. Come, brethren, let's about our business with good devotion.

[*They sing.*]

*Cursed be he that stole away his Holiness' meat from the table! maledicat Dominus!* <sup>27</sup>

*Cursed be he that struck his Holiness a blow on the face! maledicat Dominus!*

---

<sup>27</sup> "May the Lord curse him."

*Cursed be he that took Friar Sandelo a blow on the pate!*  
maledicat Dominus!

*Cursed be he that disturbeth our holy dirge!* maledicat Dominus!

*Cursed be he that took away his Holiness' wine!* maledicat Dominus!

Et omnes Sancti! <sup>28</sup> Amen!

[MEPHISTOPHILIS and FAUSTUS beat the FRIARS and fling fireworks among them; and so exeunt.]

[Enter CHORUS.]

CHORUS. When Faustus had with pleasure ta'en the view  
Of rarest things, and royal courts of kings,  
He stay'd his course, and so returnèd home;  
Where such as bear his absence but with grief,  
I mean his friends and near'st companions,  
Did gratulate his safety with kind words,  
And in their conference of what befell,  
Touching his journey through the world and air,  
They put forth questions of astrology,  
Which Faustus answer'd with such learnèd skill  
As they admir'd and wonder'd at his wit.  
Now is his fame spread forth in every land:  
Amongst the rest the Emperor is one,  
Carolus the Fifth, at whose palace now  
Faustus is feasted 'mongst his noblemen.  
What there he did, in trial of his art,  
I leave untold; your eyes shall see't perform'd. [Exit.]

---

<sup>28</sup> "And all the saints."

SCENE VIII. *Near an Inn.*

[*Enter* ROBIN THE OSTLER, *with a book in his hand.*]

ROBIN. O, this is admirable! here I ha' stolen one of Doctor Faustus' conjuring-books, and, i'faith, I mean to search some circles for my own use.

[*Enter* RALPH, *calling* ROBIN.]

RALPH. Robin, prithee, come away; there's a gentleman tarries to have his horse, and he would have his things rubbed and made clean: he keeps such a chafing with my mistress about it; and she has sent me to look thee out; prithee, come away.

ROBINS. Keep out, keep out, or else you are blown up, you are dismembered, Ralph: keep out, for I am about a roaring piece of work.

RALPH. Come, what doest thou with that same book? thou canst not read?

ROBIN. Yes, my master and mistress shall find that I can read.

RALPH. Why, Robin, what book is that?

ROBIN. What book! why, the most intolerable book for conjuring that e'er was invented by any brimstone devil.

RALPH. Canst thou conjure with it?

ROBIN. I can do all these things easily with it; first, I can make thee drunk with ippocras at any tavern in Europe for nothing; that's one of my conjuring works.

RALPH. Our Master Parson says that's nothing.

ROBIN. True, Ralph: and more, Ralph, if thou hast any mind to Nan Spit, our kitchenmaid,—

RALPH. O, brave, Robin! shall I have Nan Spit? On that condition I'll feed thy devil with horse-bread as long as he lives, of free cost.



ROBIN. No more, sweet Ralph; let's go and make clean our boots, which lie foul upon our hands, and then to our conjuring in the devil's name. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IX. *The Same.*

[*Enter ROBIN and RALPH with a silver goblet.*]

ROBIN. Come, Ralph: did not I tell thee, we were for ever made by this Doctor Faustus' book? *Ecce, signum!*<sup>29</sup> here's a simple purchase for horse-keepers: our horses shall eat no hay as long as this lasts.

RALPH. But, Robin, here comes the Vintner.

ROBIN. Hush! I'll gull him supernaturally.

[*Enter VINTNER.*]

Drawer, I hope all is paid; God be with you!—Come, Ralph.

VINTNER. Soft, sir; a word with you. I must yet have a goblet paid from you, ere you go.

ROBIN. I a goblet, Ralph, I a goblet!—I scorn you; and you are but a, &c.<sup>30</sup> I a goblet! search me.

VINTNER. I mean so, sir, with your favour.

[*Searches ROBIN.*]

ROBIN. How say you now?

VINTNER. I must say somewhat to your fellow.—You, sir!

RALPH. Me, sir! me, sir! search your fill. [VINTNER *searches him.*] Now, sir, you may be ashamed to burden honest men with a matter of truth.

VINTNER. Well, t'one of you hath this goblet about you.

RALPH. You lie, drawer, 'tis afore me [*Aside*].—Sirrah you, I'll teach you to impeach honest men;—stand by;—I'll scour you for a goblet;—stand aside you had best, I charge you in the name of Belzebub.—Look to the goblet, Ralph [*Aside to RALPH*].

<sup>29</sup> "Behold the sign."

<sup>30</sup> To be completed by the actor.

VINTNER. What mean you, sirrah?

ROBIN. I'll tell you what I mean. [*Reads from a book*] *Sanctobulorum Periphrasticon*—nay, I'll tickle you, Vintner.—Look to the goblet, Ralph [*Aside to RALPH*].—[*Reads*] *Polypragmos Belseborams framanto pacostiphos tostus, Mephistophilis, &c.*<sup>31</sup>

[*Enter MEPHISTOPHILIS, sets squibs at their backs, and then exit. They run about.*]

VINTNER. *O, nomine Domine!*<sup>32</sup> what meanest thou Robin? thou hast no goblet.

RALPH. *Peccatum peccatorum!*<sup>33</sup>—Here's thy goblet, good Vintner. [*Gives the goblet to VINTNER, who exit.*]

ROBIN. *Misericordia pro nobis!* what shall I do? Good devil, forgive me now, and I'll never rob thy library more.

[*Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS.*]

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Monarch of hell, under whose black survey

Great potentates do kneel with awful fear,  
Upon whose altars thousand souls do lie,  
How am I vexèd with these villains' charms!  
From Constantinople am I hither come,  
Only for pleasure of these damnèd slaves.

ROBIN. How, from Constantinople! you have had a great journey: will you take sixpence in your purse to pay for your supper, and be gone?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Well, villains, for your presumption, I transform thee into an ape, and thee into a dog; and so be gone. [*Exit.*]

ROBIN. How, into an ape! that's brave: I'll have fine sport with the boys; I'll get nuts and apples enow.

<sup>31</sup> This incantation means nothing. It is an invention of Robin's.

<sup>32</sup> "In the name of our Lord."

<sup>33</sup> "Sin of sins."

RALPH. And I must be a dog.

ROBIN. I' faith, thy head will never be out of the pottage-pot. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE X. *The Emperor's Court at Innsbruck.*

[*Enter* EMPEROR, FAUSTUS, and a KNIGHT, with ATTENDANTS, among whom MEPHISTOPHILIS.]

EMPEROR. Master Doctor Faustus, I have heard strange report of thy knowledge in the black art, how that none in my empire nor in the whole world can compare with thee for the rare effects of magic: they say thou hast a familiar spirit, by whom thou canst accomplish what thou list. This, therefore, is my request, that thou let me see some proof of thy skill, that mine eyes may be witnesses to confirm what mine ears have heard reported: and here I swear to thee, by the honour of mine imperial crown, that, whatever thou doest, thou shalt be no ways prejudiced or endamaged.

KNIGHT. I' faith, he looks much like a conjurer. [*Aside.*]

FAUSTUS. My gracious sovereign, though I must confess myself far inferior to the report men have published, and nothing answerable to the honour of your imperial majesty, yet, for that love and duty binds me thereunto, I am content to do whatsoever your majesty shall command me.

EMPEROR. Then, Doctor Faustus, mark what I shall say.  
As I was sometime solitary set  
Within my closet, sundry thoughts arose  
About the honour of mine ancestors,  
How they had won by prowess such exploits,  
Got such riches, subdued so many kingdoms,  
As we that do succeed, or they that shall  
Hereafter possess our throne, shall  
(I fear me) ne'er attain to that degree  
Of high renown and great authority:  
Amongst which kings is Alexander the Great,  
Chief spectacle of the world's pre-eminence,

The bright shining of whose glorious acts  
Lightens the world with his reflecting beams,  
As when I hear but motion made of him,  
It grieves my soul I never saw the man:  
If, therefore, thou, by cunning of thine art,  
Canst raise this man from hollow vaults below,  
Where lies entomb'd this famous conqueror,  
And bring with him his beauteous paramour,  
Both in their right shapes, gesture, and attire  
They us'd to wear during their time of life,  
Thou shalt both satisfy my just desire,  
And give me cause to praise thee whilst I live.

FAUSTUS. My gracious lord, I am ready to accomplish your request, so far forth as by art and power of my spirit I am able to perform.

KNIGHT. I' faith, that's just nothing at all. [Aside.]

FAUSTUS. But, if it like your grace, it is not in my ability to present before your eyes the true substantial bodies of those deceased princes, which long since are consumed to dust.

KNIGHT. Aye, marry, Master Doctor, now there's a sign of grace in you, when you will confess the truth. [Aside.]

FAUSTUS. But such spirits as can lively resemble Alexander and his paramour shall appear before your grace, in that manner that they both lived in, in their most flourishing estate; which I doubt not shall sufficiently content your imperial majesty.

EMPEROR. Go to, Master Doctor; let me see them presently.

KNIGHT. Do you hear, Master Doctor? you bring Alexander and his paramour before the Emperor!

FAUSTUS. How then, sir?

KNIGHT. I' faith, that's as true as Diana turned me to a stag.

FAUSTUS. No, sir; but, when Actaeon died, he left the horns for you.—Mephistophilis, be gone. [Exit MEPHISTOPHILIS.]

KNIGHT. Nay, an you go to conjuring, I'll be gone. [Exit.]

FAUSTUS. I'll meet with you anon for interrupting me so.—Here they are, my gracious lord.

[*Re-enter* MEPHISTOPHILIS *with* SPIRITS *in the shapes of*  
ALEXANDER *and his* PARAMOUR.]

EMPEROR. Master Doctor, I heard this lady, while she lived, had a wart or mole in her neck: how shall I know whether it be so or no?

FAUSTUS. Your highness may boldly go and see.

EMPEROR. Sure, these are no spirits, but the true substantial bodies of those two deceased princes. [*Exeunt* SPIRITS.]

FAUSTUS. Will't please your highness now to send for the knight that was so pleasant with me here of late?

EMPEROR. One of you call him forth. [*Exit* ATTENDANT.]

[*Re-enter the* KNIGHT *with a pair of horns on his head.*]

How now, sir knight! Feel on thy head.

KNIGHT. Thou damnèd wretch and execrable dog,  
Bred in the concave of some monstrous rock,  
How dar'st thou thus abuse a gentleman?  
Villain, I say, undo what thou hast done!

FAUSTUS. O, not so fast, sir! there's no haste: but, good, are you remembered how you crossed me in my conference with the Emperor? I think I have met with you for it.

EMPEROR. Good Master Doctor, at my entreaty release him: he hath done penance sufficient.

FAUSTUS. My gracious lord, not so much for the injury he offered me here in your presence, as to delight you with some mirth, hath Faustus worthily requited this injurious knight; which being all I desire, I am content to release him of his horns:—and, sir knight, hereafter speak well of scholars.—Mephistophilis, transform him straight. [*MEPHISTOPHILIS removes the horns.*]  
—Now, my good lord, having done my duty, I humbly take my leave.

EMPEROR. Farewell, Master Doctor: yet, ere you go, Expect from me a bounteous reward.

[*Exeunt* EMPEROR, KNIGHT, *and* ATTENDANTS.]

SCENE XI. *A Green; Afterwards the House of Faustus.*

FAUSTUS. Now, Mephistophilis, the restless course  
That time doth run with calm and silent foot,  
Short'ning my days and thread of vital life,  
Calls for the payment of my latest years:  
Therefore, sweet Mephistophilis, let us  
Make haste to Wittenberg.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. What, will you go on horse-back or on foot?

FAUSTUS. Nay, till I'm past this fair and pleasant green,  
I'll walk on foot.

[*Enter a HORSE-COURSER.*]

HORSE-COURSER. I have been all this day seeking one Master Fustian: mass, see where he is!—God save you, Master Doctor!

FAUSTUS. What, horse-courser! you are well met.

HORSE-COURSER. Do you hear, sir? I have brought you forty dollars for your horse.

FAUSTUS. I cannot sell him so. If thou likest him for fifty, take him.

HORSE-COURSER. Alas, sir, I have no more!—I pray you speak for me.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. I pray you, let him have him: he is an honest fellow, and he has a great charge, neither wife nor child.

FAUSTUS. Well, come, give me your money [*HORSE-COURSER gives FAUSTUS the money*]: my boy will deliver him to you. But I must tell you one thing before you have him; ride him not into the water, at any hand.

HORSE-COURSER. Why, sir, will he not drink of all waters?

FAUSTUS. O, yes, he will drink of all waters; but ride him not into the water: ride him over hedge or ditch, or where thou wilt, but not into the water.



HORSE-COURSER. Well, sir.—Now am I made man for ever: I'll not leave my horse for forty: if he had but the quality of hey-ding-ding, hey-ding-ding, I'd make a brave living on him: he has a buttock as slick as an eel [*Aside*].—Well, God b'wi'ye sir: your boy will deliver him me: but, hark ye, sir; if my horse be sick or ill at ease, you'll tell me what it is?

FAUSTUS. Away, you villain! what, dost think I am a horse-doctor? [*Exit HORSE-COURSER.*]

What art thou, Faustus, but a man condemn'd to die?  
Thy fatal time doth draw to final end;  
Despair doth drive distrust unto my thoughts:  
Confound these passions with a quiet sleep:  
Tush, Christ did call the thief upon the Cross;  
Then rest thee, Faustus, quiet in conceit.

[*Sleeps in his chair.*]

[*Re-enter HORSE-COURSER, all wet, crying.*]

HORSE-COURSER. Alas, alas! Doctor Fustian, quotha? mass, Doctor Lopus was never such a doctor: has given me a purgation, has purged me of forty dollars; I shall never see them more. But yet, like an ass as I was, I would not be ruled by him, for he bade me I should ride him into no water: now I, thinking my horse had had some rare quality that he would not have had me known of, I, like a venturous youth, rid him into the deep pond at the town's end. I was no sooner in the middle of the pond, but my horse vanished away, and I sat upon a bottle of hay, never so near drowning in my life. But I'll seek out my doctor, and have my forty dollars again, or I'll make it the dearest horse!—O yonder is his snipper-snapper.—Do you hear? you, heypass, where's your master?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Why, sir, what would you? you cannot speak with him.

HORSE-COURSER. But I will speak with him.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Why, he's fast asleep: come some other time.



HORSE-COURSER. I'll speak with him now, or I'll break his glass-windows about his ears.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. I tell thee, he has not slept this eight nights.

HORSE-COURSER. An he have not slept this eight weeks, I'll speak with him.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. See, where he is, fast asleep.

HORSE-COURSER. Aye, this is he.—God save ye, Master Doctor, Master Doctor, Master Doctor Fustian! forty dollars, forty dollars for a bottle of hay!

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Why, thou seest he hears thee not.

HORSE-COURSER. So-ho, ho! so-ho, ho! [*Holla's in his ear.*] No, will you not wake? I'll make you wake ere I go. [*Pulls FAUSTUS by the leg, and pulls it away.*] Alas, I am undone! what shall I do?

FAUSTUS. O, my leg, my leg!—Help, Mephistophilis! call the officers!—My leg, my leg!

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Come, villain, to the constable.

HORSE-COURSER. O Lord, sir, let me go, and I'll give you forty dollars more!

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Where be they?

HORSE-COURSER. I have none about me: come to my ostry, and I'll give them you.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Be gone quickly.

[*HORSE-COURSER runs away.*]

FAUSTUS. What, is he gone? farewell he! Faustus has his leg again, and the Horse-courser, I take it, a bottle of hay for his labour: well, this trick shall cost him forty dollars more.

[*Enter WAGNER.*]

How now, Wagner! what's the news with thee?

WAGNER. Sir, the Duke of Vanholt doth earnestly entreat your company.

FAUSTUS. The Duke of Vanholt! an honourable gentleman, to whom I must be no niggard of my cunning.—Come, Mephistophilis, let's away to him. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE XII. *The Court of the Duke of Vanholt.*

[*Enter the DUKE OF VANHOLT, the DUCHESS, and FAUSTUS.*]

DUKE OF VANHOLT. Believe me, Master Doctor, this merri-ment hath much pleased me.

FAUSTUS. My gracious lord, I am glad it contents you so well.—But it may be, madam, you take no delight in this. I have heard that women do long for some dainties or other: what is it, madam? tell me and you shall have it.

DUCHESS OF VANHOLT. Thanks, good Master Doctor: and, for I see your courteous intent to pleasure me, I will not hide from you the thing my heart desires; and, were it now summer, as it is January and the dead time of the winter, I would desire no better meat than a dish of ripe grapes.

FAUSTUS. Alas, madam, that's nothing!—Mephistophilis, be gone. [*Exit MEPHISTOPHILIS.*] Were it a greater thing than this, so it would content you, you should have it.

[*Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS with grapes.*]

Here they be, madam: will't please you taste on them?

DUKE OF VANHOLT. Believe me, Master Doctor, this makes me wonder above the rest, that being in the dead time of winter and in the month of January, how you should come by these grapes.

FAUSTUS. If it like your grace, the year is divided into two circles over the whole world, that, when it is here winter with us, in the contrary circle it is summer with them, as in India, Saba, and farther countries in the east; and by means of a swift spirit that I have, I had them brought hither, as ye see.—How do you like them, madam? be they good?

DUCHESS OF VANHOLT. Believe me, Master Doctor, they be the best grapes that e'er I tasted in my life before.

FAUSTUS. I am glad they content you so, madam.

DUKE OF VANHOLT. Come, madam, let us in, where you must well reward this learned man for the great kindness he hath showed to you.

DUCHESS OF VANHOLT. And so I will, my lord; and, whilst I live, rest beholding for this courtesy.

FAUSTUS. I humbly thank your grace.

DUKE OF VANHOLT. Come, Master Doctor, follow us, and receive your reward. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE XIII. *A Room in the House of Faustus.*

[*Enter WAGNER.*]

WAGNER. I think my master means to die shortly,  
For he hath given to me all his goods:  
And yet, methinketh, if that death were near,  
He would not banquet, and carouse, and swill  
Amongst the students, as even now he doth,  
Who are at supper with such belly-cheer  
As Wagner ne'er beheld in all his life.  
See, where they come! belike the feast is ended.

[*Enter FAUSTUS with two or three SCHOLARS, and  
MEPHISTOPHILIS.*]

FIRST SCHOLAR. Master Doctor Faustus, since our conference about fair ladies, which was the beautiful'st in all the world, we have determined with ourselves that Helen of Greece was the admirablest lady that ever lived: therefore, Master Doctor, if you will do us that favour, as to let us see that peerless dame of Greece, whom all the world admires for majesty, we should think ourselves much beholding unto you.

FAUSTUS. Gentlemen,  
For that I know your friendship is unfeign'd,  
And Faustus' custom is not to deny  
The just requests of those that wish him well,

You shall behold that peerless dame of Greece,  
No otherways for pomp and majesty  
Than when Sir Paris cross'd the seas with her,  
And brought the spoils to rich Dardania.  
Be silent, then, for danger is in words.

[*Music sounds, and HELEN passeth over the stage.*]

SECOND SCHOLAR. Too simple is my wit to tell her praise,  
Whom all the world admires for majesty.

THIRD SCHOLAR. No marvel though the angry Greeks  
pursu'd

With ten years' war the rape of such a queen,  
Whose heavenly beauty passeth all compare.

FIRST SCHOLAR. Since we have seen the pride of Nature's  
works,

And only paragon of excellence,  
Let us depart; and for this glorious deed  
Happy and blest be Faustus evermore!

FAUSTUS. Gentlemen, farewell: the same I wish to you.

[*Exeunt SCHOLARS and WAGNER.*]

[*Enter an OLD MAN.*]

OLD MAN. Ah, Doctor Faustus, that I might prevail  
To guide thy steps unto the way of life,  
By which sweet path thou may'st attain the goal  
That shall conduct thee to celestial rest!  
Break heart, drop blood, and mingle it with tears,  
Tears falling from repentant heaviness  
Of thy most vile and loathsome filthiness,  
The stench whereof corrupts the inward soul  
With such flagitious crimes of heinous sins  
As no commiseration may expel,  
But mercy, Faustus, of thy Saviour sweet,  
Whose blood alone must wash away thy guilt.

FAUSTUS. Where art thou, Faustus? wretch, what hast thou done?

Damn'd art thou, Faustus, damn'd; despair and die!  
Hell calls for right, and with a roaring voice  
Says, 'Faustus, come; thine hour is almost come';  
And Faustus now will come to do thee right.

[MEPHISTOPHILIS gives him a dagger.]

OLD MAN. Ah, stay, good Faustus, stay thy desperate steps!

I see an angel hovers o'er thy head,  
And, with a vial full of precious grace,  
Offers to pour the same into thy soul:  
Then call for mercy, and avoid despair.

FAUSTUS. Ah, my sweet friend, I feel  
Thy words to comfort my distressèd soul!  
Leave me a while to ponder on my sins.

OLD MAN. I go, sweet Faustus; but with heavy cheer,  
Fearing the ruin of thy hopeless soul. [Exit.]

FAUSTUS. Accursèd Faustus, where is mercy now?  
I do repent; and yet I do despair:  
Hell strives with grace for conquest in my breast:  
What shall I do to shun the snares of death?

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Thou traitor, Faustus, I arrest thy soul  
For disobedience to my sovereign lord:  
Revolt, or I'll in piece-meal tear thy flesh.

FAUSTUS. Sweet Mephistophilis, entreat thy lord  
To pardon my unjust presumption,  
And with my blood again I will confirm  
My former vow I made to Lucifer.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Do it, then, quickly, with unfeignèd  
heart,  
Lest greater danger do attend thy drift.

[FAUSTUS stabs his arms, and writes on a paper  
with his blood.]

FAUSTUS. Torment, sweet friend, that base and crooked  
 age,  
 That durst dissuade me from thy Lucifer,  
 With greatest torments that our hell affords.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. His faith is great; I cannot touch his  
 soul;  
 But what I may afflict his body with  
 I will attempt, which is but little worth.

FAUSTUS. One thing, good servant, let me crave of thee,  
 To glut the longing of my heart's desire,—  
 That I might have unto my paramour  
 That heavenly Helen which I saw of late,  
 Whose sweet embracings may extinguish clean  
 These thoughts that do dissuade me from my vow,  
 And keep mine oath I made to Lucifer.

MEPHISTOPHILIS. Faustus, this, or what else thou shalt  
 desire,  
 Shall be perform'd in twinkling of an eye.

[*Re-enter HELEN.*]

FAUSTUS. Was this the face that launch'd a thousand ships,  
 And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?—  
 Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.— [*Kisses her.*]  
 Her lips suck forth my soul: see where it flees!—  
 Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.  
 Here will I dwell, for heaven is in these lips,  
 And all is dross that is not Helena.  
 I will be Paris, and for love of thee,  
 Instead of Troy, shall Wittenberg be sack'd  
 And I will combat with weak Menelaus,  
 And wear thy colours on my plumèd crest;  
 Yes, I will wound Achilles in the heel,  
 And then return to Helen for a kiss.  
 O, thou art fairer than the evening air  
 Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars;  
 Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter

When he appear'd to hapless Semele;  
More lovely than the monarch of the sky  
In wanton Arethusa's azur'd arms;  
And none but thou shalt be my paramour!

[*Exeunt.*]

[*Enter the OLD MAN.*]

OLD MAN. Accursèd Faustus, miserable man,  
That from thy soul excluds't the grace of heaven.  
And fly'st the throne of his tribunal-seat!

[*Enter DEVILS.*]

Satan begins to sift me with his pride:  
As in this furnace God shall try my faith,  
My faith, vile hell, shall triumph over thee.  
Ambitious fiends, see how the heavens smile  
At your repulse, and laugh your state to scorn!  
Hence, hell! for hence I fly unto my God.

[*Exeunt,—on one side DEVILS, on the other OLD MAN.*]

#### SCENE XIV. *The Same.*

[*Enter FAUSTUS, with Scholars.*]

FAUSTUS. Ah, gentlemen!

FIRST SCHOLAR. What ails Faustus?

FAUSTUS. Ah, my sweet chamber-fellow, had I lived with thee, then had I lived still! but now I die eternally. Look, comes he not? comes he not?

SECOND SCHOLAR. What means Faustus?

THIRD SCHOLAR. Belike he is grown into some sickness by being over-solitary.

FIRST SCHOLAR. If it be so, we'll have physicians to cure him.—'Tis but a surfeit; never fear, man.



FAUSTUS. A surfeit of deadly sin, that hath damned both body and soul.

SECOND SCHOLAR. Yet, Faustus, look up to heaven; remember God's mercies are infinite.

FAUSTUS. But Faustus' offence can ne'er be pardoned: the serpent that tempted Eve may be saved, but not Faustus. Ah, gentlemen, hear me with patience, and tremble not at my speeches! Though my heart pants and quivers to remember that I have been a student here these thirty years, O, would I had never seen Wittenberg, never read book! and what wonders I have done, all Germany can witness, yea, all the world; for which Faustus hath lost both Germany and the world, yea, heaven itself, heaven, the seat of God, the throne of the blessed, the kingdom of joy; and must remain in hell for ever,—hell, ah, hell, for ever! Sweet friends, what shall become of Faustus, being in hell for ever?

THIRD SCHOLAR. Yet, Faustus, call on God.

FAUSTUS. On God, whom Faustus hath abjured! on God, whom Faustus hath blasphemed! Ah, my God, I would weep! but the devil draws in my tears. Gush forth blood, instead of tears! yea, life and soul—O, he stays my tongue! I would lift up my hands; but see, they hold them, they hold them!

ALL. Who, Faustus?

FAUSTUS. Lucifer and Mephistophilis. Ah, gentlemen, I gave them my soul for my cunning!

ALL. God forbid.

FAUSTUS. God forbade it, indeed; but Faustus hath done it: for vain pleasure of twenty-four years hath Faustus lost eternal joy and felicity. I writ them a bill with mine own blood: the date is expired; the time will come, and he will fetch me.

FIRST SCHOLAR. Why did not Faustus tell us of this before, that divines might have prayed for thee?

FAUSTUS. Oft have I thought to have done so; but the devil threatened to tear me in pieces, if I named God, to fetch both body and soul, if I once gave ear to divinity: and now 'tis too late. Gentlemen, away, lest you perish with me.

SECOND SCHOLAR. O, what shall we do to save Faustus?

FAUSTUS. Talk not of me, but save yourselves, and depart.

THIRD SCHOLAR. God will strengthen me; I will stay with Faustus.

FIRST SCHOLAR. Tempt not God, sweet friend; but let us into the next room, and there pray for him.

FAUSTUS. Aye, pray for me, pray for me; and what noise soever ye hear, come not unto me, for nothing can rescue me.

SECOND SCHOLAR. Pray thou, and we will pray that God may have mercy upon thee.

FAUSTUS. Gentlemen, farewell if I live till morning, I'll visit you; if not, Faustus is gone to hell.

ALL. Faustus, farewell.

[*Exeunt SCHOLARS.—The clock strikes eleven.*]

FAUSTUS. Ah, Faustus,  
Now hast thou but one bare hour to live,  
And then thou must be damn'd perpetually!  
Stand still, you ever-moving spheres of heaven,  
That time may cease, and midnight never come;  
Fair Nature's eye, rise, rise again, and make  
Perpetual day; or let this hour be but  
A year, a month, a week, a natural day,  
That Faustus may repent and save his soul!  
*O lente, lente currite noctis equi!*<sup>34</sup>  
The stars move still,<sup>35</sup> time runs, the clock will strike,  
The devil will come, and Faustus must be damn'd.  
O, I'll leap up to my God!—Who pulls me down?—  
See, see, where Christ's blood streams in the firmament!  
One drop would save my soul, half a drop: ah, my Christ! —  
Ah, rend not my heart for naming of my Christ!  
Yet will I call on him: O, spare me, Lucifer!—  
Where is it now? 'tis gone: and see, where God

<sup>34</sup> "Slowly, run slowly, horses of the night."

<sup>35</sup> Always.

Stretcheth out his arm, and bends his ireful brows!  
Mountains and hills, come, come, and fall on me,  
And hide me from the heavy wrath of God!  
No, no!

Then will I headlong run into the earth:  
Earth, gape! O, no, it will not harbour me!  
You stars that reign'd at my nativity,  
Whose influence hath allotted death and hell,  
Now draw up Faustus, like a foggy mist,  
Into the entrails of yon lab'ring clouds,  
That, when you vomit forth into the air,  
My limbs may issue from your smoky mouths,  
So that my soul may but ascend to heaven!

[*The clock strikes the half-hour.*]

Ah, half the hour is past! 'twill all be past anon.  
O God,  
If thou wilt not have mercy on my soul,  
Yet for Christ's sake, whose blood hath ransom'd me,  
Impose some end to my incessant pain;  
Let Faustus live in hell a thousand years,  
A hundred thousand, and at last be sav'd!  
O, no end is limited to damnèd souls!  
Why wert thou not a creature wanting soul?  
Or why is this immortal that thou hast?  
Ah, Pythagoras' metempsychosis, were that true,  
This soul should fly from me, and I be chang'd  
Unto some brutish beast! all beasts are happy,  
For, when they die,  
Their souls are soon dissolv'd in elements;  
But mine must live still to be plagu'd in hell.  
Curs'd be the parents that engender'd me!  
No, Faustus, curse thyself, curse Lucifer  
That hath depriv'd thee of the joys of heaven.

[*The clock strikes twelve.*]

O, it strikes, it strikes! Now, body, turn to air,  
Or Lucifer will bear thee quick to hell!

[*Thunder and lightning.*]

O soul, be chang'd into little water-drops,  
And fall into the ocean, ne'er be found!

[*Enter DEVILS.*]

My God, my God, look not so fierce on me!  
Adders and serpents, let me breathe a while!  
Ugly hell, gape not! come not, Lucifer!  
I'll burn my books!—Ah, Mephistophilis!

[*Exeunt DEVILS with FAUSTUS.*]

[*Enter CHORUS.*]

CHORUS. Cut is the branch that might have grown full  
straight,  
And burnèd is Apollo's laurel-bough,  
That sometime grew within this learnèd man.  
Faustus is gone: regard his hellish fall,  
Whose fiendful fortune may exhort the wise,  
Only to wonder at unlawful things,  
Whose deepness doth entice such forward wits  
To practise more than heavenly power permits. [Exit.]

*Terminat hora diem; terminat auctor opus.*



SAMSON AGONISTES

BY

JOHN MILTON

(1671)





## INTRODUCTION

*Samson Agonistes*, or Samson the Agonist, Athlete, or Wrestler, was written by John Milton during the last years of his life when, afflicted with ills and blindness, he turned his creative gift to the composition of an austere and consoling tragedy. As every reader of Milton's life instantly perceives, Milton found in Samson's plight a parallel to his own. According to his biographer, David Masson: "Milton also in his veteran days, after the Restoration, was a champion at bay, a prophet-warrior left alone among men of a different faith and different manners—Philistines who exulted in the ruin of his cause, and wreaked their wrath upon him for his past services. He also was blind, as Samson had been—and had to live mainly in the imagery of the past." Like Samson, he had eschewed strong drink, only to blunder "by marrying a Philistine woman—one not of his own tribe, and having no thoughts or interests in common with his own." No wonder is it then that Milton found in Judges XIII-XVI an appealing tragic figure for his great dramatic poem.

Milton wrote the play not for the stage, which at that time had become so corrupt as to justify much of his Puritan condemnation of it, but for readers who might perceive that "Tragedy as it was anciently composed was the gravest, moralest and most profitable of all other poems". Since it was to be read, he did not divide it into acts and scenes, but introduced in Greek fashion a chorus between the episodes. He limited the number of characters, kept strictly the unities of action, time, and place, avoided the depiction of violent scenes, and employed a Messenger to describe the catastrophe. In Samson he depicted a heroic figure, a chosen servant of God fallen to abject misery, but after trials and testing, triumphant in death over his enemies.

Like Job, Samson is visited in his misery by Comforters, who echo his laments and contrast his pitiable state with his

former glory. Unlike Prometheus or the Job of the Symposium, Samson does not assert his integrity or impugn the Divine, but repeatedly upbraids himself, like a remorseful Puritan, for his grievous blunder in marrying a Philistine and betraying to Delilah the secret of the strength God had given him. He will not take upon himself, however, the blame for the state of fallen Israel, since the Governors were responsible for not taking advantage of the deliverance he had brought.

The main action of the poem opens with the first test of Samson's repentance. To the suggestion of Manoa, his father, that God is unjust in having raised Samson as his champion and then deserted him, Samson replies:

"Appoint not heavenly disposition, father.  
Nothing of these evils hath befallen me  
But justly; I myself have brought them on;  
Sole author, I, sole cause."

He rejects his father's plan to sue the Philistines for release, nor will he yield to the temptation to question God's providence. The second test of his righteousness he meets with equal victory by repudiating the renewed blandishments and specious arguments of Delilah. He will not be caught a second time by beauty which hath "Strange power to regain Love once possessed". Nor is his spirit quelled by the third test when Harapha pours upon him taunts and insults for his loss of strength. "My trust," he answers, "is in the Living God." He meets the fourth test of fidelity to the God of his fathers by refusing to parade his strength in a public performance at the solemn feast of Dagon, but when the command is repeated, an inner prompting leads him to obey. Because of his steadfastness in repentance and faith, God restores him to favor, and again chooses him as a champion to overthrow Dagon and pull down the temple on his enemies. Though the hero himself perish in the destruction:

"Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail  
Or knock the breast; no weakness, no contempt  
Dispraise or blame; nothing but well and fair  
And what may quiet us in a death so noble."

Thus, in one of the noblest philosophical dramas of all literature, God's ways are justified to men by faith. "He that shall endure unto the end shall be saved." Not by rebellion nor by insistence upon one's own righteousness like Job of the Symposium or Prometheus, not by passive resignation like Everyman, but by sincere repentance, noble achievements and unshaken faith may mankind be delivered from the snares and afflictions of mortal life. The Chorus closes this grand poem in the exalted mood of great tragedy with the assurance: "All is best" and "With peace and consolation, and calm of mind, all passion spent."

### References.

David Masson, *Life of Milton*, 7 vols. (London, 1859-1894); one volume biographies by Mark Pattison, (London, 1879); Richard Garnett (London, 1890); W. P. Trent (New York, 1899); Walter Raleigh (New York, 1900); A valuable recent guide is J. H. Hanford's *A Milton Handbook* (New York, 1926), which includes a useful bibliography of all important recent studies of Milton's life and works.



TEXT OF THE PLAY

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

SAMSON.

MANOA, *the father of Samson.*

DALILA, *his wife.*

HARAPHA *of Gath.*

PUBLIC OFFICER.

MESSENGER.

CHORUS OF DANITES.

## SAMSON AGONISTES

ARGUMENT.—SAMSON, made captive, blind, and now in the prison at Gaza, there to labour as in a common workhouse, on a festival day, in the general cessation from labour, comes forth into the open air, to a place nigh, somewhat retired, there to sit a while and bemoan his condition. Where he happens at length to be visited by certain friends and equals of his tribe, which make the Chorus, who seek to comfort him what they can; then by his old father, Manoa, who endeavours the like, and withal tells him his purpose to procure his liberty by ransom; lastly, that this feast was proclaimed by the Philistines as a day of thanksgiving for their deliverance from the hands of Samson—which yet more troubles him. Manoa then departs to prosecute his endeavour with the Philistian lords for Samson's redemption: who, in the meanwhile, is visited by other persons, and, lastly, by a public officer to require his coming to the feast before the lords and people, to play or show his strength in their presence. He at first refuses, dismissing the public officer with absolute denial to come; at length, persuaded inwardly that this was from God, he yields to go along with him, who came now the second time with great threatenings to fetch him. The Chorus yet remaining on the place, Manoa returns full of joyful hope to procure ere long his son's deliverance; in the midst of which discourse an Ebrew comes in haste, confusedly at first, and afterwards more distinctly, relating the catastrophe—what Samson had done to the Philistines, and by accident to himself; wherewith the Tragedy ends.

SCENE. *Before the Prison in Gaza.*

SAMSON. A little onward lend thy guiding hand  
To these dark steps, a little further on;



For yonder bank hath choice of sun or shade.  
There I am wont to sit, when any chance  
Relieves me from my task of servile toil,  
Daily in the common prison else enjoined me,  
Where I, a prisoner chained, scarce freely draw  
The air, imprisoned also, close and damp,  
Unwholesome draught. But here I feel amends—  
The breath of heaven fresh blowing, pure and sweet,  
With day-spring born; here leave me to respire.  
This day a solemn feast the people hold  
To Dagon, their sea-idol, and forbid  
Laborious works. Unwillingly this rest  
Their superstition yields me; hence, with leave  
Retiring from the popular noise, I seek  
This unfrequented place to find some ease—  
Ease to the body some, none to the mind  
From restless thoughts, that, like a deadly swarm  
Of hornets armed, no sooner found alone  
But rush upon me thronging, and present  
Times past, what once I was, and what am now.  
Oh, wherefore was my birth from Heaven foretold  
Twice by an Angel, who at last, in sight  
Of both my parents, all in flames ascended  
From off the altar where an offering burned,  
As in a fiery column charioting  
His godlike presence, and from some great act  
Or benefit revealed to Abraham's race?  
Why was my breeding ordered and prescribed  
As of a person separate to God,  
Designed for great exploits, if I must die  
Betrayed, captived, and both my eyes put out,  
Made of my enemies the scorn and gaze,  
To grind in brazen fetters under task  
With this heaven-gifted strength? O glorious strength,  
Put to the labour of a beast, debased  
Lower than bond-slave! Promise was that I  
Should Israel from Philistian yoke deliver!

Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him  
Eyeless in Gaza, at the mill with slaves,  
Himself in bonds under Philistian yoke.  
Yet stay; let me not rashly call in doubt  
Divine prediction. What if all foretold  
Had been fulfilled but through mine own default?  
Whom have I to complain of but myself,  
Who this high gift of strength committed to me,  
In what part lodged, how easily bereft me,  
Under the seal of silence could not keep,  
But weakly to a woman must reveal it,  
O'ercome with importunity and tears?  
O impotence of mind in body strong!  
But what is strength without a double share  
Of wisdom? Vast, unwieldy, burdensome,  
Proudly secure, yet liable to fall  
By weakest subtleties; not made to rule,  
But to subserve where wisdom bears command.  
God, when he gave me strength, to show withal  
How slight the gift was, hung it in my hair.  
But peace! I must not quarrel with the will  
Of highest dispensation, which herein  
Haply had ends above my reach to know.  
Suffices that to me strength is my bane,  
And proves the source of all my miseries —  
So many, and so huge, that each apart  
Would ask a life to wail. But, chief of all,  
O loss of sight, of thee I most complain!  
Blind among enemies! O worse than chains,  
Dungeon, or beggary, or decrepit age!  
Light, the prime work of God, to me is extinct,  
And all her various objects of delight  
Annulled, which might in part my grief have eased,  
Inferior to the vilest now become  
Of man or worm, the vilest here excel me:  
They creep, yet see; I, dark in light, exposed  
To daily fraud, contempt, abuse, and wrong,

Within doors, or without, still as a fool,  
In power of others, never in my own—  
Scarce half I seem to live, dead more than half.  
O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,  
Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse  
Without all hope of day!  
O first-created beam, and thou great Word,  
“Let there be light, and light was over all,”  
Why am I thus bereaved thy prime decree?  
The Sun to me is dark  
And silent as the Moon,  
When she deserts the night,  
Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.  
Since light so necessary is to life,  
And almost life itself, if it be true  
That light is in the soul,  
She all in every part, why was the sight  
To such a tender ball as the eye confined,  
So obvious and so easy to be quenched,  
And not, as feeling, through all parts diffused,  
That she might look at will through every pore?  
Then had I not been thus exiled from light,  
As in the land of darkness, yet in light,  
To live a life half dead, a living death,  
And buried; but, O yet more miserable!  
Myself my sepulchre, a moving grave;  
Buried, yet not exempt,  
By privilege of death and burial,  
From worst of other evils, pains, and wrongs;  
But made hereby obnoxious more  
To all the miseries of life,  
Life in captivity  
Among inhuman foes.  
But who are these? for with joint pace I hear  
The tread of many feet steering this way;  
Perhaps my enemies, who come to stare  
At my affliction, and perhaps to insult—

Their daily practice to afflict me more.

CHORUS. This, this is he; softly a while;  
Let us not break in upon him.  
O change beyond report, thought, or belief!  
See how he lies at random, carelessly diffused,  
With languished head unpropt,  
As one past hope, abandoned,  
And by himself given over,  
In slavish habit, ill-fitted weeds  
O'er-worn and soiled.  
Or do my eyes misrepresent? Can this be he,  
That heroic, that renowned,  
Irresistible Samson? whom, unarmed,  
No strength of man, or fiercest wild beast, could withstand;  
Who tore the lion as the lion tears the kid;  
Ran on embattled armies clad in iron,  
And, weaponless himself,  
Made arms ridiculous, useless the forgery  
Of brazen shield and spear, the hammered cuirass,  
Chalybean-tempered steel, and frock of mail  
Adamantean proof:  
But safest he who stood aloof,  
When insupportably his foot advanced,  
In scorn of their proud arms and warlike tools,  
Spurned them to death by troops. The bold Ascalonite  
Fled from his lion ramp; old warriors turned  
Their plated backs under his heel,  
Or grovelling soiled their crested helmets in the dust.  
Then with what trivial weapon came to hand,  
The jaw of a dead ass, his sword of bone,  
A thousand foreskins fell, the flower of Palestine,  
In Ramath-lechi, famous to this day:  
Then by main force pulled up, and on his shoulders bore,  
The gates of Azza, post and massy bar,  
Up to the hill by Hebron, seat of giants old—  
No journey of a sabbath-day, and loaded so—  
Like whom the Gentiles feign to bear up Heaven.

Which shall I first bewail—  
Thy bondage or lost sight,  
Prison within prison  
Inseparably dark?  
Thou art become (O worst imprisonment!)  
The dungeon of thyself; thy soul  
(Which men enjoying sight oft without cause complain)  
Imprisoned now indeed,  
In real darkness of the body dwells,  
Shut up from outward light  
To incorporate with gloomy night;  
For inward light, alas!  
Puts forth no visual beam.  
O mirror of our fickle state,  
Since man on earth, unparalleled,  
The rarer thy example stands,  
By how much from the top of wondrous glory,  
Strongest of mortal men,  
To lowest pitch of abject fortune thou art fallen.  
For him I reckon not in high estate  
Whom long descent of birth,  
Or the sphere of fortune, raises;  
But thee, whose strength, while virtue was her mate,  
Might have subdued the Earth,  
Universally crowned with highest praises.

SAMSON. I hear the sound of words; their sense the air  
Dissolves unjointed ere it reach my ear.

CHORUS. He speaks: let us draw nigh. Matchless in might,  
The glory late of Israel, now the grief!  
We come, thy friends and neighbours not unknown,  
From Eshtaol and Zora's fruitful vale,  
To visit or bewail thee; or, if better,  
Counsel or consolation we may bring,  
Salve to thy sores: apt words have power to swage  
The tumours of a troubled mind,  
And are as balm to festered wounds.

SAMSON. Your coming, friends, revives me; for I learn

Now of my own experience, not by talk,  
How counterfeit a coin they are who 'friends'  
Bear in their superscription (of the most  
I would be understood). In prosperous days  
They swarm, but in adverse withdraw their head,  
Not to be found, though sought. Ye see, O friends,  
How many evils have enclosed me round;  
Yet that which was the worst now least afflicts me,  
Blindness; for, had I sight, confused with shame,  
How could I once look up, or heave the head,  
Who, like a foolish pilot, have shipwrecked  
My vessel trusted to me from above,  
Gloriously rigged, and for a word, a tear,  
Fool! have divulged the secret gift of God  
To a deceitful woman? Tell me, friends,  
Am I not sung and proverbied for a fool  
In every street? Do they not say, 'How well  
Are come upon him his deserts'? Yet why?  
Immeasurable strength they might behold  
In me; of wisdom nothing more than mean.  
This with the other should at least have paired;  
These two, proportioned ill, drove me transverse.

CHORUS. Tax not divine disposal. Wisest men  
Have erred, and by bad women been deceived;  
And shall again, pretend they ne'er so wise.  
Deject not, then, so overmuch thyself,  
Who hast of sorrow thy full load besides.  
Yet, truth to say, I oft have heard men wonder  
Why thou should'st wed Philistian women rather  
Than of thine own tribe fairer, or as fair,  
At least of thy own nation, and as noble.

SAMSON. The first I saw at Timna, and she pleased  
Me, not my parents, that I sought to wed  
The daughter of an infidel. They knew not  
That what I motioned was of God; I knew  
From intimate impulse, and therefore urged  
The marriage on, that, by occasion hence,



I might begin Israel's deliverance—  
The work to which I was divinely called.  
She proving false, the next I took to wife  
(O that I never had! fond wish too late!)  
Was in the vale of Sorec, Dalila,  
That specious monster, my accomplished snare.  
I thought it lawful from my former act,  
And the same end, still watching to oppress  
Israel's oppressors. Of what now I suffer  
She was not the prime cause, but I myself,  
Who, vanquished with a peal of words, (O weakness!)  
Gave up my fort of silence to a woman.

CHORUS. In seeking just occasion to provoke  
The Philistine, thy country's enemy,  
Thou never wast remiss, I bear thee witness;  
Yet Israel still serves with all his sons.

SAMSON. That fault I take not on me, but transfer  
On Israel's governors and heads of tribes,  
Who, seeing those great acts which God had done  
Singly by me against their conquerors,  
Acknowledged not, or not at all considered,  
Deliverance offered. I, on the other side,  
Used no ambition to commend my deeds;  
The deeds themselves, though mute, spoke loud the doer.  
But they persisted deaf, and would not seem  
To count them things worth notice, till at length  
Their lords, the Philistines, with gathered powers,  
Entered Judea, seeking me, who then  
Safe to the rock of Etham was retired—  
Not flying, but forecasting in what place  
To set upon them, what advantaged best.  
Meanwhile the men of Judah, to prevent  
The harass of their land, beset me round;  
I willingly on some conditions came  
Into their hands, and they as gladly yield me  
To the Uncircumcised a welcome prey,  
Bound with two cords. But cords to me were threads



Touched with the flame: on their whole host I flew  
Unarmed, and with a trivial weapon felled  
Their choicest youth; they only lived who fled.  
Had Judah that day joined, or one whole tribe,  
They had by this possessed the towers of Gath,  
And lorded over them whom now they serve.  
But what more oft, in nations grown corrupt,  
And by their vices brought to servitude,  
Than to love bondage more than liberty—  
Bondage with ease than strenuous liberty—  
And to despise, or envy, or suspect,  
Whom God hath of his special favour raised  
As their deliverer? If he aught begin,  
How frequent to desert him, and at last  
To heap ingratitude on worthiest deeds!

CHORUS. Thy words to my remembrance bring  
How Succoth and the fort of Penue!l  
Their great deliverer contemned,  
The matchless Gideon, in pursuit  
Of Madian, and her vanquished kings;  
And how ingrateful Ephraim  
Had dealt with Jephtha, who by argument,  
Not worse than by his shield and spear,  
Defended Israel from the Ammonite,  
Had not his prowess quelled their pride  
In that sore battle when so many died  
Without reprieve, adjudged to death  
For want of well pronouncing *Shibboleth*.

SAMSON. Of such examples add me to the roll.  
Me easily indeed mine may neglect,  
But God's proposed deliverance not so.

CHORUS Just are the ways of God,  
And justifiable to men,  
Unless there be who think not God at all.  
If any be, they walk obscure;  
For of such doctrine never was there school,  
But the heart of the fool,

And no man therein doctor but himself.

Yet more there be who doubt his ways not just,  
As to his own edicts found contradicting;  
Then give the reins to wandering thought,  
Regardless of his glory's diminution,  
Till, by their own perplexities involved,  
They ravel more, still less resolved,  
But never find self-satisfying solution.

As if they would confine the Interminable,  
And tie him to his own prescript,  
Who made our laws to bind us, not himself,  
And hath full right to exempt  
Whomso it pleases him by choice  
From national obstruction, without taint  
Of sin, or legal debt;  
For with his own laws he can best dispense.

He would not else, who never wanted means,  
Nor in respect of the enemy just cause,  
To set his people free,  
Have prompted this heroic Nazarite,  
Against his vow of strictest purity,  
To seek in marriage that fallacious bride,  
Unclean, unchaste.

Down, Reason, then; at least, vain reasonings down;  
Though Reason here aver  
That moral verdict quits her of unclean:  
Unchaste was subsequent; her stain, not his.

But see! here comes thy reverend sire,  
With careful step, locks white as down,  
Old Manoa: advise  
Forthwith how thou ought'st to receive him.

SAMSON. Ay me! another inward grief, awaked  
With mention of that name, renews the assault.

MANOA. Brethren and men of Dan (for such ye seem  
Though in this uncouth place), if old respect,  
As I suppose, towards your once gloried friend,  
My son, now captive, hither hath informed

Your younger feet, while mine, cast back with age,  
Came lagging after, say if he be here.

CHORUS. As signal now in low dejected state  
As erst in highest, behold him where he lies.

MANOA. O miserable change! Is this the man,  
That invincible Samson, far renowned,  
The dread of Israel's foes, who with a strength  
Equivalent to Angels' walked their streets,  
None offering fight; who, single combatant,  
Duelled their armies ranked in proud array,  
Himself an army—now unequal match  
To save himself against a coward armed  
At one spear's length? O ever-failing trust  
In mortal strength! and, ho, what not in man  
Deceivable and vain? Nay, what thing good  
Prayed for, but often proves our woe, our bane?  
I prayed for children, and thought barrenness  
In wedlock a reproach; I gained a son,  
And such a son as all men hailed me happy:  
Who would be now a father in my stead?  
Oh, wherefore did God grant me my request,  
And as a blessing with such pomp adorned?  
Why are his gifts desirable, to tempt  
Our earnest prayers, then, given with solemn hand  
As graces, draw a scorpion's tail behind?  
For this did the Angel twice descend? for this  
Ordained thy nurture holy, as of a plant  
Select and sacred? glorious for a while,  
The miracle of men; then in an hour  
Ensnared, assaulted, overcome, led bound,  
Thy foes' derision, captive, poor and blind,  
Into a dungeon thrust, to work with slaves!  
Alas! methinks whom God hath chosen once  
To worthiest deeds, if he through frailty err,  
He should not so o'erwhelm, and as a thrall  
Subject him to so foul indignities,  
Be it but for honour's sake of former deeds.

SAMSON. Appoint not heavenly disposition, father.  
Nothing of all these evils hath befallen me  
But justly; I myself have brought them on;  
Sole author I, sole cause. If aught seem vile,  
As vile hath been my folly, who have profaned  
The mystery of God, given me under pledge  
Of vow, and have betrayed it to a woman,  
A Canaanite, my faithless enemy.  
This well I knew, nor was at all surprised,  
But warned by oft experience. Did not she  
Of Timna first betray me, and reveal  
The secret wrested from me in her highth  
Of nuptial love professed, carrying it straight  
To them who had corrupted her, my spies  
And rivals? In this other was there found  
More faith, who, also in her prime of love,  
Spousal embraces, vitiated with gold,  
Though offered only, by the scent conceived,  
Her spurious first-born, Treason against me?  
Thrice she assayed, with flattering prayers and sighs,  
And amorous reproaches, to win from me  
My capital secret, in what part my strength  
Lay stored, in what part summed, that she might know;  
Thrice I deluded her, and turned to sport  
Her importunity, each time perceiving  
How openly and with what impudence  
She purposed to betray me, and (which was worse  
Than undissembled hate) with what contempt  
She sought to make me traitor to myself.  
Yet, the fourth time, when, mustering all her wiles,  
With blandished parleys, feminine assaults,  
Tongue-batteries, she surceased not day nor night  
To storm me, over-watched and wearied out,  
At times when men seek most repose and rest,  
I yielded, and unlocked her all my heart,  
Who, with a grain of manhood well resolved,  
Might easily have shook off all her snares;

But foul effeminacy held me yoked  
Her bond-slave. O indignity, O blot  
To honour and religion! servile mind  
Rewarded well with servile punishment!  
The base degree to which I now am fallen,  
These rags, this grinding, is not yet so base  
As was my former servitude, ignoble,  
Unmanly, ignominious, infamous,  
True slavery; and that blindness worse than this,  
That saw not how degenerately I served.

MANOA. I cannot praise thy marriage-choices, son—  
Rather approved them not; but thou didst plead  
Divine impulsion prompting how thou might'st  
Find some occasion to infest our foes.  
I state not that; this I am sure—our foes  
Found soon occasion thereby to make thee  
Their captive, and their triumph; thou the sooner  
Temptation found'st, or over-potent charms,  
To violate the sacred trust of silence  
Deposited within thee—which to have kept  
Tacit was in thy power. True; and thou bear'st  
Enough, and more, the burden of that fault;  
Bitterly hast thou paid, and still art paying,  
That rigid score. A worse thing yet remains:  
This day the Philistines a popular feast  
Here celebrate in Gaza, and proclaim  
Great pomp, and sacrifice, and praises loud,  
To Dagon, as their god who hath delivered  
Thee, Samson, bound and blind, into their hands—  
Them out of thine, who slew'st them many a slain.  
So Dagon shall be magnified, and God,  
Besides whom is no god, compared with idols,  
Disglorified, blasphemed, and had in scorn  
By the idolatrous rout amidst their wine;  
Which to have come to pass by means of thee,  
Samson, of all thy sufferings think the heaviest,  
Of all reproach the most with shame that ever

Could have befallen thee and thy father's house.

SAMSON. Father, I do acknowledge and confess  
That I this honour, I this pomp, have brought  
To Dagon, and advanced his praises high  
Among the Heathen round—to God have brought  
Dishonour, obloquy, and oped the mouths  
Of idolists and atheists; have brought scandal  
To Israel, diffidence of God, and doubt  
In feeble hearts, propense enough before  
To waver, or fall off and join with idols:  
Which is my chief affliction, shame and sorrow,  
The anguish of my soul, that suffers not  
Mine eyes to harbour sleep, or thoughts to rest.  
This only hope relieves me, that the strife  
With me hath end. All the contest is now  
'Twixt God and Dagon. Dagon hath presumed,  
Me overthrown, to enter lists with God,  
His deity comparing and preferring  
Before the God of Abraham. He, be sure,  
Will not connive, or linger, thus provoked,  
But will arise, and his great name assert.  
Dagon must stoop, and shall ere long receive  
Such a discomfit as shall quite despoil him  
Of all these boasted trophies won on me,  
And with confusion blank his worshipers.

MANOA. With cause this hope relieves thee; and these words:  
I as a prophecy receive; for God  
(Nothing more certain) will not long defer  
To vindicate the glory of his name  
Against all competition, nor will long  
Endure it doubtful whether God be Lord  
Or Dagon. But for thee what shall be done?  
Thou must not in the meanwhile, here forgot,  
Lie in this miserable loathsome plight  
Neglected. I already have made way  
To some Philistian lords, with whom to treat  
About thy ransom. Well they may by this



Have satisfied their utmost of revenge,  
By pains and slaveries, worse than death, inflicted  
On thee, who now no more canst do them harm.

SAMSON. Spare that proposal, father; spare the trouble  
Of that solicitation. Let me here,  
As I deserve, pay on my punishment,  
And expiate, if possible, my crime,  
Shameful garrulity. To have revealed  
Secrets of *men*, the secrets of a friend,  
How heinous had the fact been, how deserving  
Contempt and scorn of all—to be excluded  
All friendship, and avoided as a blab,  
The mark of fool set on his front!  
But I *God's* counsel have not kept, his holy secret  
Presumptuously have published, impiously,  
Weakly at least and shamefully—a sin  
That Gentiles in their parables condemn  
To their Abyss and horrid pains confined.

MANOA. Be penitent, and for thy fault contrite;  
But act not in thy own affliction, son.  
Repent the sin; but, if the punishment  
Thou canst avoid, self-preservation bids;  
Or the execution leave to high disposal,  
And let another hand, not thine, exact  
Thy penal forfeit from thyself. Perhaps  
God will relent, and quit thee all his debt;  
Who ever more approves and more accepts  
(Best pleased with humble and filial submission)  
Him who, imploring mercy, sues for life,  
Than who, self-rigorous, chooses death as due;  
Which argues over-just, and self-displeased  
For self-offence more than for God offended.  
Reject not, then, what offered means who knows  
But God hath set before us to return thee  
Home to thy country and his sacred house,  
Where thou may'st bring thy offerings, to avert  
His further ire, with prayers and vows renewed.



SAMSON. His pardon I implore; but, as for life,  
To what end should I seek it? When in strength  
All mortals I excelled, and great in hopes,  
With youthful courage, and magnanimous thoughts  
Of birth from Heaven foretold and high exploits,  
Full of divine instinct, after some proof  
Of acts indeed heroic, far beyond  
The sons of Anak, famous now and blazed,  
Fearless of danger, like a petty god  
I walked about, admired of all, and dreaded  
On hostile ground, none daring my affront—  
Then, swollen with pride, into the snare I fell  
Of fair fallacious looks, venereal trains,  
Softened with pleasure and voluptuous life,  
At length to lay my head and hallowed pledge  
Of all my strength in the lascivious lap  
Of a deceitful concubine, who shore me,  
Like a tame wether, all my precious fleece,  
Then turned me out ridiculous, despoiled,  
Shaven, and disarmed among my enemies.

CHORUS. Desire of wine and all delicious drinks,  
Which many a famous warrior overturns,  
Thou could'st repress; nor did the dancing ruby,  
Sparkling out-poured, the flavour or the smell,  
Or taste, that cheers the heart of gods and men,  
Allure thee from the cool crystalline stream.

SAMSON. Wherever fountain or fresh current flowed  
Against the eastern ray, translucent, pure  
With touch ethereal of Heaven's fiery rod,  
I drank, from the clear milky juice allaying  
Thirst, and refreshed; nor envied them the grape  
Whose heads that turbulent liquor fills with fumes.

CHORUS. O madness! to think use of strongest wines  
And strongest drinks our chief support of health,  
When God with these forbidden made choice to rear  
His mighty champion, strong above compare,  
Whose drink was only from the liquid brook!

SAMSON. But what availed this temperance, not complete  
Against another object more enticing?  
What boots it at one gate to make defence,  
And at another to let in the foe,  
Effeminately vanquished? by which means,  
Now blind, disheartened, shamed, dishonoured, quelled,  
To what can I be useful? wherein serve  
My nation, and the work from Heaven imposed?  
But to sit idle on the household hearth,  
A burdenous drone; to visitants a gaze,  
Or pitied object; these redundant locks,  
Robustious to no purpose, clustering down,  
Vain monument of strength; till length of years  
And sedentary numbness craze my limbs  
To a contemptible old age obscure.  
Here rather let me drudge, and earn my bread,  
Till vermin, or the draff of servile food,  
Consume me, and oft-invoked death  
Hasten the welcome end of all my pains.

MANOA. Wilt thou then serve the Philistines with that gift  
Which was expressly given thee to annoy them?  
Better at home lie bed-rid, not only idle,  
Inglorious, unemployed, with age outworn.  
But God, who caused a fountain at thy prayer  
From the dry ground to spring, thy thirst to allay  
After the brunt of battle, can as easy  
Cause light again within thy eyes to spring,  
Wherewith to serve him better than thou hast.  
And I persuade me so. Why else this strength  
Miraculous yet remaining in those locks?  
His might continues in thee not for naught,  
Nor shall his wondrous gifts be frustrate thus.

SAMSON. All otherwise to me my thoughts portend—  
That these dark orbs no more shall treat with light.  
Nor the other light of life continue long,  
But yield to double darkness nigh at hand;  
So much I feel my genial spirits droop,

My hopes all flat: Nature within me seems  
In all her functions weary of herself;  
My race of glory run, and race of shame,  
And I shall shortly be with them that rest.

MANOA. Believe not these suggestions, which proceed  
From anguish of the mind, and humours black  
That mingle with thy fancy. I, however,  
Must not omit a father's timely care  
To prosecute the means of thy deliverance  
By ransom or how else: meanwhile be calm,  
And healing words from these thy friends admit.

SAMSON. Oh, that torment should not be confined  
To the body's wounds and sores,  
With maladies innumerable  
In heart, head, breast, and reins,  
But must secret passage find  
To the inmost mind,  
There exercise all his fierce accidents,  
And on her purest spirits prey,  
As on entrails, joints, and limbs,  
With answerable pains, but more intense,  
Though void of corporal sense!

My griefs not only pain me  
As a lingering disease,  
But, finding no redress, ferment and rage;  
Nor less than wounds immedicable  
Rankle, and fester, and gangrene,  
To black mortification.  
Thoughts, my tormentors, armed with deadly stings,  
Mangle my apprehensive tenderest parts,  
Exasperate, exulcerate, and raise  
Dire inflammation, which no cooling herb  
Or medicinal liquor can assuage,  
Nor breath of vernal air from snowy Alp.  
Sleep hath forsook and given me o'er  
To death's benumbing opium as my only cure;  
Thence faintings, swoonings of despair,

And sense of Heaven's desertion.

I was his nursing once and choice delight,  
His destined from the womb,  
Promised by heavenly message twice descending.  
Under his special eye  
Abstemious I grew up and thrived amain;  
He led me on to mightiest deeds,  
Above the nerve of mortal arm,  
Against the Uncircumcised, our enemies:  
But now hath cast me off as never known,  
And to those cruel enemies,  
Whom I by his appointment had provoked,  
Left me all helpless, with the irreparable loss  
Of sight, reserved alive to be repeated  
The subject of their cruelty or scorn.  
Nor am I in the list of them that hope;  
Hopeless are all my evils, all remediless.  
This one prayer yet remains, might I be heard,  
No long petition—speedy death,  
The close of all my miseries and the balm.

CHORUS. Many are the sayings of the wise,  
In ancient and in modern books enrolled,  
Extolling patience as the truest fortitude,  
And to the bearing well of all calamities,  
All chances incident to man's frail life,  
Consolatories writ  
With studied argument, and much persuasion sought,  
Lenient of grief and anxious thought.  
But with the afflicted in his pangs their sound  
Little prevails, or rather seems a tune  
Harsh, and of dissonant mood from his complaint,  
Unless he feel within  
Some source of consolation from above,  
Secret refreshings that repair his strength  
And fainting spirits uphold.

God of our fathers! what is Man,  
That thou towards him with hand so various—

Or might I say contrarious?—

Temper'st thy providence through his short course:

Not evenly, as thou rul'st

The angelic orders, and inferior creatures mute,

Irrational and brute?

Nor do I name of men the common rout,

That, wandering loose about,

Grow up and perish as the summer fly,

Heads without name, no more remembered;

But such as thou hast solemnly elected,

With gifts and graces eminently adorned,

To some great work, thy glory,

And people's safety, which in part they effect.

Yet toward these, thus dignified, thou oft,

Amidst their highth of noon,

Changest thy countenance and thy hand, with no regard

Of highest favours past

From thee on them, or them to thee of service.

Nor only dost degrade them, or remit

To life obscured, which were a fair dismissal,

But throw'st them lower than thou didst exalt them high—

Unseemly falls in human eye,

Too grievous for the trespass or omission;

Oft leav'st them to the hostile sword

Of heathen and profane, their carcasses

To dogs and fowls a prey, or else captived,

Or to the unjust tribunals, under change of times,

And condemnation of the ungrateful multitude.

If these they scape, perhaps in poverty

With sickness and disease thou bow'st them down,

Painful diseases and deformed,

In crude old age;

Though not disordinate, yet causeless suffering

The punishment of dissolute days. In fine,

Just or unjust alike seem miserable,

For oft alike both come to evil end.

So deal not with this once thy glorious champion,

The image of thy strength, and mighty minister.  
What do I beg? how hast thou dealt already!  
Behold him in this state calamitous, and turn  
His labors, for thou canst, to peaceful end.

But who is this? what thing of sea or land—  
Female of sex it seems—  
That, so bedecked, ornate, and gay,  
Comes this way sailing,  
Like a stately ship  
Of Tarsus, bound for the isles  
Of Javan or Gadire,  
With all her bravery on, and tackle trim,  
Sails filled, and streamers waving,  
Courtied by all the winds that hold them play;  
An amber scent of odorous perfume  
Her harbinger, a damsel train behind?  
Some rich Philistian matron she may seem;  
And now, at nearer view, no other certain  
Than Dalila thy wife.

SAMSON. My wife! my traitress! let her not come near me.

CHORUS. Yet on she moves; now stands and eyes thee fixed,  
About to have spoke; but now, with head declined,  
Like a fair flower surcharged with dew, she weeps,  
And words addressed seem into tears dissolved,  
Wetting the borders of her silken veil.  
But now again she makes address to speak.

DALILA. With doubtful feet and wavering resolution  
I came, still dreading thy displeasure, Samson;  
Which to have merited, without excuse,  
I cannot but acknowledge. Yet, if tears  
May expiate (though the fact more evil drew  
In the perverse event than I foresaw),  
My penance hath not slackened, though my pardon  
No way assured. But conjugal affection,  
Prevailing over fear and timorous doubt,  
Hath led me on, desirous to behold  
Once more thy face, and know of thy estate,



If aught in my ability may serve  
To lighten what thou suffer'st, and appease  
Thy mind with what amends is in my power—  
Though late, yet in some part to recompense  
My rash but more unfortunate misdeed.

SAMSON. Out, out, hyæna! These are thy wonted arts,  
And arts of every woman false like thee—  
To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray;  
Then, as repentant, to submit, beseech,  
And reconciliation move with feigned remorse,  
Confess, and promise wonders in her change—  
Not truly penitent, but chief to try  
Her husband, how far urged his patience bears,  
His virtue or weakness which way to assail:  
Then, with more cautious and instructed skill,  
Again transgresses, and again submits;  
That wisest and best men, full oft beguiled,  
With goodness principled not to reject  
The penitent, but ever to forgive,  
Are drawn to wear out miserable days,  
Entangled with a poisonous bosom-snake,  
If not by quick destruction soon cut off,  
As I by thee, to ages an example.

DALILA. Yet hear me, Samson; not that I endeavor  
To lessen or extenuate my offence,  
But that, on the other side, if it be weighed  
By itself, with aggravations not surcharged,  
Or else with just allowance counterpoised.  
I may, if possible, thy pardon find  
The easier towards me, or thy hatred less.  
First granting, as I do, it was a weakness  
In me, but incident to all our sex,  
Curiosity, inquisitive, importune  
Of secrets, then with like infirmity  
To publish them—both common female faults —  
Was it not weakness also to make known  
For importunity, that is for naught,



Wherein consisted all thy strength and safety?  
To what I did thou show'dst me first the way.  
But I to enemies revealed, and should not!  
Nor should'st thou have trusted that to woman's frailty:  
Ere I to thee, thou to thyself wast cruel.  
Let weakness, then, with weakness come to parle,  
So near related, or the same of kind;  
Thine forgive mine, that men may censure thine  
The gentler, if severely thou exact not  
More strength from me than in thyself was found.  
And what if love, which thou interpret'st hate,  
The jealousy of love, powerful of sway  
In human hearts, nor less in mine towards thee,  
Caused what I did? I saw thee mutable  
Of fancy; feared lest one day thou would'st leave me  
As her at Timna; sought by all means, therefore,  
How to endear, and hold thee to me firmest:  
No better way I saw than by importuning  
To learn thy secrets, get into my power  
Thy key of strength and safety. Thou wilt say,  
'Why, then, revealed?' I was assured by those  
Who tempted me that nothing was designed  
Against thee but safe custody and hold.  
That made for me; I knew that liberty  
Would draw thee forth to perilous enterprises,  
While I at home sat full of cares and fears,  
Wailing thy absence in my widowed bed;  
Here I should still enjoy thee, day and night,  
Mine and love's prisoner, not the Philistines',  
Whole to myself, unhazarded abroad,  
Fearless at home of partners in my love.  
These reasons in Love's law have passed for good,  
Though fond and reasonless to some perhaps;  
And love hath oft, well meaning, wrought much woe,  
Yet always pity or pardon hath obtained.  
Be not unlike all others, not austere  
As thou art strong, inflexible as steel.

If thou in strength all mortals dost exceed,  
In uncompassionate anger do not so.

SAMSON. How cunningly the sorceress displays  
Her own transgressions, to upbraid me mine!  
That malice, not repentance, brought thee hither  
By this appears, I gave, thou say'st, the example,  
I led the way—bitter reproach, but true;  
I to myself was false ere thou to me.  
Such pardon, therefore, as I give my folly  
Take to thy wicked deed; which when thou seest  
Impartial, self-severe, inexorable,  
Thou wilt renounce thy seeking, and much rather  
Confess it feigned. Weakness is thy excuse,  
And I believe it—weakness to resist  
Philistian gold. If weakness may excuse,  
What murderer, what traitor, parricide,  
Incestuous, sacrilegious, but may plead it?  
All wickedness is weakness; that plea, therefore,  
With God or man will gain thee no remission.  
But love constrained thee! Call it furious rage  
To satisfy thy lust. Love seeks to have love;  
My love how could'st thou hope, who took'st the way  
To raise in me inexpiable hate,  
Knowing, as needs I must, by thee betrayed?  
In vain thou striv'st to cover shame with shame,  
Or by evasions thy crime uncover'st more.

DALILA. Since thou determin'st weakness for no plea  
In man or woman, though to thy own condemning,  
Hear what assaults I had, what snares besides,  
What sieges girt me round, ere I consented;  
Which might have awed the best-resolved of men,  
The constantest, to have yielded without blame.  
It was not gold, as to my charge thou lay'st,  
That wrought with me. Thou know'st the magistrates  
And princes of my country came in person,  
Solicited, commanded, threatened, urged,  
Adjured by all the bonds of civil duty

And of religion—pressed how just it was,  
How honorable, how glorious, to entrap  
A common enemy, who had destroyed  
Such numbers of our nation: and the priest  
Was not behind, but ever at my ear,  
Preaching how meritorious with the gods  
It would be to ensnare an irreligious  
Dishonorer of Dagon. What had I  
To oppose against such powerful arguments?  
Only my love of thee held long debate,  
And combated in silence all these reasons  
With hard contest. At length, that grounded maxim,  
So rife and celebrated in the mouths  
Of wisest men, that to the public good  
Private respects must yield, with grave authority  
Took full possession of me, and prevailed;  
Virtue, as I thought, truth, duty, so enjoining.

SAMSON. I thought where all thy circling wiles would end—  
In feigned religion, smooth hypocrisy!  
But, had thy love, still odiously pretended,  
Been, as it ought, sincere, it would have taught thee  
Far other reasonings, brought forth other deeds.  
I, before all the daughters of my tribe  
And of my nation, chose thee from among  
My enemies, loved thee, as too well thou knew'st;  
Too well; unbosomed all my secrets to thee,  
Not out of levity, but overpowered  
By thy request, who could deny thee nothing;  
Yet now am judged an enemy. Why, then,  
Didst thou at first receive me for thy husband—  
Then, as since then, thy country's foe professed?  
Being once a wife, for me thou wast to leave  
Parents and country; nor was I their subject,  
Nor under their protection, but my own;  
Thou mine, not theirs. If aught against my life  
Thy country sought of thee, it sought unjustly,  
Against the law of nature, law of nations;

No more thy country, but an impious crew  
Of men conspiring to uphold their state  
By worse than hostile deeds, violating the ends  
For which our country is a name so dear;  
Not therefore to be obeyed. But zeal moved thee;  
To please thy gods thou didst it! Gods unable  
To acquit themselves and prosecute their foes  
But by ungodly deeds, the contradiction  
Of their own deity, Gods cannot be—  
Less therefore to be pleased, obeyed, or feared.  
These false pretexts and varnished colors failing,  
Bare in thy guilt, how foul must thou appear!

DALILA. In argument with men a woman ever  
Goes by the worse, whatever be her cause.

SAMSON. For want of words, no doubt, or lack of breath!  
Witness when I was worried with thy peals.

DALILA. I was a fool, too rash, and quite mistaken  
In what I thought would have succeeded best.  
Let me obtain forgiveness of thee, Samson;  
Afford me place to show what recompense  
Towards thee I intend for what I have misdone,  
Misguided. Only what remains past cure  
Bear not too sensibly, nor still insist  
To afflict thyself in vain. Though sight be lost,  
Life yet hath many solaces, enjoyed  
Where other senses want not their delights—  
At home, in leisure and domestic ease,  
Exempt from many a care and chance to which  
Eyesight exposes, daily, men abroad.  
I to the lords will intercede, not doubting  
Their favorable ear, that I may fetch thee  
From forth this loathsome prison-house, to abide  
With me, where my redoubled love and care,  
With nursing diligence, to me glad office,  
May ever tend about thee to old age,  
With all things grateful cheered, and so supplied  
That what by me thou hast lost thou least shalt miss.

SAMSON. No, no; of my condition take no care;  
It fits not; thou and I long since are twain;  
Nor think me so unwary or accursed  
To bring my feet again into the snare  
Where once I have been caught. I know thy trains,  
Though dearly to my cost, thy gins, and toils.  
Thy fair enchanted cup, and warbling charms,  
No more on me have power; their force is nulled;  
So much of adder's wisdom I have learned,  
To fence my ear against thy sorceries.  
If in my flower of youth and strength, when all men  
Loved, honored, feared me, thou alone could hate me,  
Thy husband, slight me, sell me, and forgo me,  
How would'st thou use me now, blind, and thereby  
Deceivable, in most things as a child  
Helpless, thence easily contemned and scorned,  
And last neglected! How would'st thou insult,  
When I must live uxorious to thy will  
In perfect thralldom! how again betray me,  
Bearing my words and doings to the lords  
To gloss upon, and, censuring, frown or smile!  
This jail I count the house of liberty  
To thine, whose doors my feet shall never enter.

DALILA. Let me approach at least, and touch thy hand.

SAMSON. Not for thy life, lest fierce remembrance wake  
My sudden rage to tear thee joint by joint.  
At distance I forgive thee; go with that;  
Bewail thy falsehood, and the pious works  
It hath brought forth to make thee memorable  
Among illustrious women, faithful wives;  
Cherish thy hastened widowhood with the gold  
Of matrimonial treason: so farewell.

DALILA. I see thou art implacable, more deaf  
To prayers than winds and seas. Yet winds to seas  
Are reconciled at length, and sea to shore:  
Thy anger, unappeasable, still rages,  
Eternal tempest never to be calmed.

Why do I humble thus myself, and, suing  
For peace, reap nothing but repulse and hate,  
Bid go with evil omen, and the brand  
Of infamy upon my name denounced?  
To mix with thy concernments I desist  
Henceforth, nor too much disapprove my own.  
Fame, if not double-faced, is double-mouthed,  
And with contrary blast proclaims most deeds;  
On both his wings, one black, the other white,  
Bears greatest names in his wild aery flight.  
My name, perhaps, among the Circumcised  
In Dan, in Judah, and the bordering tribes,  
To all posterity may stand defamed,  
With malediction mentioned, and the blot  
Of falsehood most unconjugal traduced.  
But in my country, where I most desire,  
In Acron, Gaza, Asdod, and in Gath,  
I shall be named among the famousest  
Of women, sung at solemn festivals,  
Living and dead recorded, who, to save  
Her country from a fierce destroyer, chose  
Above the faith of wedlock bands; my tomb  
With odors visited and annual flowers;  
Not less renowned than in Mount Ephraim  
Jael, who, with inhospitable guile,  
Smote Sisera sleeping, through the temples nailed.  
Nor shall I count it heinous to enjoy  
The public marks of honor and reward  
Conferred upon me for the piety  
Which to my country I was judged to have shown.  
At this whoever envies or repines,  
I leave him to his lot, and like my own.

CHORUS. She's gone—a manifest serpent by her sting  
Discovered in the end, till now concealed.

SAMSON. So let her go. God sent her to debase me,  
And aggravate my folly, who committed  
To such a viper his most sacred trust



Of secrecy, my safety, and my life.

CHORUS. Yet beauty, though injurious, hath strange power,  
After offence returning, to regain  
Love once possessed, nor can be easily  
Repulsed, without much inward passion felt,  
And secret sting of amorous remorse.

SAMSON. Love-quarrels oft in pleasing concord end;  
Not wedlock-treachery endangering life.

CHORUS. It is not virtue, wisdom, valor, wit,  
Strength, comeliness of shape, or amplest merit,  
That woman's love can win, or long inherit;  
But what it is, hard is to say,  
Harder to hit,

Which way soever men refer it,  
(Much like thy riddle, Samson) in one day  
Or seven though one should musing sit.

If any of these, or all, the Timnian bride  
Had not so soon preferred  
Thy paranymp, worthless to thee compared,  
Successor in thy bed,  
Nor both so loosely disallied  
Their nuptials, nor this last so treacherously  
Had shorn the fatal harvest of thy head.  
Is it for that such outward ornament  
Was lavished on their sex, that inward gifts  
Were left for haste unfinished, judgment scant,  
Capacity not raised to apprehend  
Or value what is best,  
In choice, but ofttest to affect the wrong?  
Or was too much of self-love mixed,  
Of constancy no root infix'd,  
That either they love nothing, or not long?

Whate'er it be, to wisest men and best,  
Seeming at first all heavenly under virgin veil,  
Soft, modest, meek, demure,  
Once joined, the contrary she proves—a thorn  
Intestine, far within defensive arms



A cleaving mischief, in his way to virtue  
Adverse and turbulent; or by her charms  
Draws him awry, enslaved  
With dotage, and his sense depraved  
To folly and shameful deeds, which ruin ends.  
What pilot so expert but needs must wreck,  
Embarked with such a steers-mate at the helm?

Favored of Heaven who finds  
One virtuous, rarely found,  
That in domestic good combines!  
Happy that house! his way to peace is smooth:  
But virtue which breaks through all opposition,  
And all temptation can remove,  
Most shines and most is acceptable above.

Therefore God's universal law  
Gave to the man despotic power  
Over his female in due awe,  
Nor from that right to part an hour,  
Smile she or lour:

So shall he least confusion draw  
On his whole life, not swayed  
By female usurpation, nor dismayed.

But had we best retire? I see a storm.

SAMSON. Fair days have oft contracted wind and rain.

CHORUS. But this another kind of tempest brings.

SAMSON. Be less abstruse; my riddling days are past.

CHORUS. Look now for no enchanting voice, nor fear  
The bait of honeyed words; a rougher tongue  
Draws hitherward; I know him by his stride,  
The giant Harapha of Gath, his look  
Haughty, as is his pile high-built and proud.  
Comes he in peace? What wind hath blown him hither  
I less conjecture than when first I saw  
The sumptuous Dalila floating this way:  
His habit carries peace, his brow defiance.

SAMSON. Or peace or not, alike to me he comes.

CHORUS. His fraught we soon shall know: he now arrives.

HARAPHA. I come not, Samson, to condole thy chance,  
As these perhaps, yet wish it had not been,  
Though for no friendly intent. I am of Gath;  
Men call me Harapha, of stock renowned  
As Og, or Anak, and the Emins old  
That Kiriathaim held. Thou know'st me now,  
If thou at all art known. Much I have heard  
Of thy prodigious might and feats performed,  
Incredible to me, in this displeased,  
That I was never present on the place  
Of those encounters, where we might have tried  
Each other's force in camp or listed field;  
And now am come to see of whom such noise  
Hath walked about, and each limb to survey,  
If thy appearance answer loud report.

SAMSON. The way to know were not to see, but taste.

HARAPHA. Dost thou already single me? I thought  
Gyves and the mill had tamed thee. O that fortune  
Had brought me to the field where thou art famed  
To have wrought such wonders with an ass's jaw!  
I should have forced thee soon with other arms,  
Or left thy carcass where the ass lay thrown;  
So had the glory of prowess been recovered  
To Palestine, won by a Philistine  
From the unforeskinned race, of whom thou bear'st  
The highest name for valiant acts. That honor,  
Certain to have won by mortal duel from thee,  
I lose, prevented by thy eyes put out.

SAMSON. Boast not of what thou would'st have done,  
but do  
What then thou would'st; thou seest it in thy hand.

HARAPHA. To combat with a blind man I disdain,  
And thou hast need much washing to be touched.

SAMSON. Such usage as your honorable lords  
Afford me, assassinated and betrayed;  
Who durst not with their whole united powers  
In fight withstand me single and unarmed,

Nor in the house with chamber-ambushes  
Close-banded durst attack me, no, not sleeping,  
Till they had hired a woman with their gold,  
Breaking her marriage-faith, to circumvent me.  
Therefore, without feign'd shifts, let be assigned  
Some narrow place enclosed, where sight may give thee,  
Or rather flight, no great advantage on me;  
Then put on all thy gorgeous arms, thy helmet  
And brigandine of brass, thy broad habergeon,  
Vant-brace and greaves and gauntlet; add thy spear,  
A weaver's beam, and seven-times-folded shield:  
I only with an oaken staff will meet thee,  
And raise such outcries on thy clattered iron,  
Which long shall not withhold me from thy head,  
That in a little time, while breath remains thee,  
Thou oft shalt wish thyself at Gath, to boast  
Again in safety what thou would'st have done  
To Samson, but shalt never see Gath more.

HARAPHA. Thou durst not thus disparage glorious arms  
Which greatest heroes have in battle worn,  
Their ornament and safety, had not spells  
And black enchantments, some magician's art,  
Armed thee or charmed thee strong, which thou from Heaven  
Feign'dst at thy birth was given thee in thy hair,  
Where strength can least abide, though all thy hairs  
Were bristles ranged like those that ridge the back  
Of chafed wild boars or ruffled porcupines.

SAMSON. I know no spells, use no forbidden arts;  
My trust is in the Living God, who gave me,  
At my nativity, this strength, diffused  
No less through all my sinews, joints, and bones,  
Than thine, while I preserved these locks unshorn,  
The pledge of my unviolated vow.  
For proof hereof, if Dagon be thy god,  
Go to his temple, invoke his aid  
With solemnest devotion, spread before him  
How highly it concerns his glory now

To frustrate and dissolve these magic spells,  
Which I to be the power of Israel's God  
Avow, and challenge Dagon to the test,  
Offering to combat thee, his champion bold,  
With the utmost of his godhead seconded:  
Then thou shalt see, or rather to thy sorrow  
Soon feel, whose God is strongest, thine or mine.

HARAPHA. Presume not on thy God. Whate'er he be,  
Thee he regards not, owns not, hath cut off  
Quite from his people, and delivered up  
Into thy enemies' hand; permitted them  
To put out both thine eyes, and fettered send thee  
Into the common prison, there to grind  
Among the slaves and asses, thy comrades,  
As good for nothing else, no better service  
With those thy boisterous locks; no worthy match  
For valour to assail, nor by the sword  
Of noble warrior, so to stain his honor,  
But by the barber's razor best subdued.

SAMSON. All these indignities, for such they are  
From thine, these evils I deserve and more,  
Acknowledge them from God inflicted on me  
Justly, yet despair not of his final pardon,  
Whose ear is ever open, and his eye  
Gracious to re-admit the suppliant;  
In confidence whereof I once again  
Defy thee to the trial of mortal fight,  
By combat to decide whose god is God,  
Thine, or whom I with Israel's sons adore.

HARAPHA. Fair honor that thou dost thy God, in trusting  
He will accept thee to defend his cause,  
A murderer, a revolter, and a robber!

SAMSON. Tongue-doughty giant, how dost thou prove me  
these?

HARAPHA. Is not thy nation subject to our lords?  
Their magistrates confessed it when they took thee  
As a league-breaker, and delivered bound

Into our hands; for hadst thou not committed  
Notorious murder on those thirty men  
At Ascalon, who never did thee harm,  
Then, like a robber, stripp'dst them of their robes?  
The Philistines, when thou hadst broke the league,  
Went up with armed powers thee only seeking,  
To others did no violence nor spoil.

SAMSON. Among the daughters of the Philistines  
I chose a wife, which argued me no foe,  
And in your city held my nuptial feast;  
But your ill-meaning politician lords,  
Under pretence of bridal friends and guests,  
Appointed to await me thirty spies,  
Who, threatening cruel death, constrained the bride  
To wring from me, and tell to them, my secret,  
That solved the riddle which I had proposed.  
When I perceived all set on enmity,  
As on my enemies, wherever chanced,  
I used hostility, and took their spoil,  
To pay my underminers in their coin.  
My nation was subjected to your lords!  
It was the force of conquest; force with force  
Is well ejected when the conquered can.  
But I, a private person, whom my country  
As a league-breaker gave up bound, presumed  
Single rebellion, and did hostile acts!  
I was no private, but a person raised,  
With strength sufficient, and command from Heaven,  
To free my country. If their servile minds  
Me, their deliverer sent, would not receive,  
But to their masters gave me up for nought,  
The unworthier they; whence to this day they serve.  
I was to do my part from Heaven assigned,  
And had performed it if my known offence  
Had not disabled me, not all your force.  
These shifts refuted, answer thy appelland,  
Though by his blindness maimed for high attempts,

Who now defies thee thrice to single fight,  
As a petty enterprise of small enforce.

HARAPHA. With thee, a man condemned, a slave enrolled,  
Due by the law to capital punishment?  
To fight with thee no man of arms will deign.

SAMSON. Can'st thou for this, vain boaster, to survey me,  
To descant on my strength, and give thy verdict?  
Come nearer; part not hence so slight informed;  
But take good heed my hand survey not thee.

HARAPHA. O Baal-zebub! can my ears unused  
Hear these dishonors, and not render death?

SAMSON. No man withholds thee; nothing from thy hand  
Fear I incurable; bring up thy van;  
My heels are fettered, but my fist is free.

HARAPHA. This insolence other kind of answer fits.

SAMSON. Go, baffled coward, lest I run upon thee,  
Though in these chains, bulk without spirit vast,  
And with one buffet lay thy structure low,  
Or swing thee in the air, then dash thee down,  
To the hazard of thy brains and shattered sides.

HARAPHA. By Astaroth, ere long thou shalt lament  
These braveries, in irons loaden on thee.

CHORUS. His giantship is gone somewhat crest-fallen,  
Stalking with less unconscionable strides,  
And lower looks, but in a sultry chafe.

SAMSON. I dread him not, nor all his giant brood,  
Though fame divulge him father of five sons,  
All of gigantic size, Goliath chief.

CHORUS. He will directly to the lords, I fear,  
And with malicious counsel stir them up  
Some way or other yet further to afflict thee.

SAMSON. He must allege some cause, and offered fight  
Will not dare mention, lest a question rise  
Whether he durst accept the offer or not;  
And that he durst not plain enough appeared.  
Much more affliction than already felt  
They cannot well impose, nor I sustain,



If they intend advantage of my labors,  
The work of many hands, which earns my keeping,  
With no small profit daily to my owners.  
But come what will; my deadliest foe will prove  
My speediest friend, by death to rid me hence;  
The worst that he can give to me the best.  
Yet so it may fall out, because their end  
Is hate, not help to me, it may with mine  
Draw their own ruin who attempt the deed.

CHORUS. O, how comely it is, and how reviving  
To the spirits of just men long oppressed,  
When God into the hands of their deliverer  
Puts invincible might,  
To quell the mighty of the earth, the oppressor,  
The brute and boisterous force of violent men,  
Hardy and industrious to support  
Tyrannic power, but raging to pursue  
The righteous, and all such as honor truth!  
He all their ammunition  
And feats of war defeats,  
With plain heroic magnitude of mind  
And celestial vigor armed;  
Their armories and magazines contemns,  
Renders them useless, while  
With winged expedition  
Swift as the lightning glance he executes  
His errand on the wicked, who, surprised,  
Lose their defence, distracted and amazed.

But patience is more oft the exercise  
Of saints, the trial of their fortitude,  
Making them each his own deliverer,  
And victor over all  
That tyranny or fortune can inflict.  
Either of these is in thy lot,  
Samson, with might endued  
Above the sons of men; but sight bereaved  
May chance to number thee with those



Whom patience finally must crown.

This Idol's day hath been to thee no day of rest,  
Laboring thy mind  
More than the working day thy hands.  
And yet, perhaps, more trouble is behind;  
For I descry this way  
Some other tending; in his hand  
A sceptre or quaint staff he bears,  
Comes on amain, speed in his look.  
By his habit I discern him now  
A public officer, and now at hand.  
His message will be short and voluble.

OFFICER. Ebrews, the prisoner Samson here I seek.

CHORUS. His manacles remark him; there he sits.

OFFICER. Samson, to thee our lords thus bid me say:  
This day to Dagon is a solemn feast,  
With sacrifices, triumph, pomp, and games;  
Thy strength they know surpassing human rate,  
And now some public proof thereof require  
To honor this great feast, and great assembly.  
Rise, therefore, with all speed, and come along,  
Where I will see thee heartened and fresh clad,  
To appear as fits before the illustrious lords.

SAMSON. Thou know'st I am an Ebrew; therefore tell them  
Our law forbids at their religious rites  
My presence; for that cause I cannot come.

OFFICER. This answer, be assured, will not content them.

SAMSON. Have they not sword-players, and every sort  
Of gymnic artists, wrestlers, riders, runners,  
Jugglers and dancers, antics, mummers, mimics,  
But they must pick me out, with shackles tired,  
And over-labored at their public mill,  
To make them sport with blind activity?  
Do they not seek occasion of new quarrels,  
On my refusal, to distress me more,  
Or make a game of my calamities?  
Return the way thou cam'st; I will not come.

OFFICER. Regard thyself; this will offend them highly.

SAMSON. Myself! my conscience, and internal peace.  
Can they think me so broken, so debased  
With corporal servitude, that my mind ever  
Will condescend to such absurd commands?  
Although their drudge, to be their fool or jester,  
And, in my midst of sorrow and heart-grief,  
To show them feats, and play before their god—  
The worst of all indignities, yet on me  
Joined with extreme contempt! I will not come.

OFFICER. My message was imposed on me with speed,  
Brooks no delay: is this thy resolution?

SAMSON. So take it with what speed thy message needs.

OFFICER. I am sorry what this stoutness will produce.

SAMSON. Perhaps thou shalt have cause to sorrow indeed.

CHORUS. Consider, Samson; matters now are strained  
Up to the highth, whether to hold or break.

He's gone, and who knows how he may report  
Thy words by adding fuel to the flame?  
Expect another message, more imperious,  
More lordly thundering than thou well wilt bear.

SAMSON. Shall I abuse this consecrated gift  
Of strength, again returning with my hair  
After my great transgression—so requite  
Favor renewed, and add a greater sin  
By prostituting holy things to idols,  
A Nazarite, in place abominable,  
Vaunting my strength in honor to their Dagon?  
Besides how vile, contemptible, ridiculous,  
What act more execrably unclean, profane?

CHORUS. Yet with this strength thou serv'st the Philistines,  
Idolatrous, uncircumcised, unclean.

SAMSON. Not in their idol-worship, but by labor  
Honest and lawful to deserve my food  
Of those who have me in their civil power.

CHORUS. Where the heart joins not, outward acts defile  
not.

SAMSON. Where outward force constrains, the sentence holds:

But who constrains me to the temple of Dagon,  
Not dragging? The Philistian lords command:  
Commands are no constraints. If I obey them,  
I do it freely, venturing to displease  
God for the fear of man, and man prefer,  
Set God behind; which, in his jealousy,  
Shall never, unrepented, find forgiveness.  
Yet that he may dispense with me, or thee,  
Present in temples at idolatrous rites  
For some important cause, thou need'st not doubt.

CHORUS. How thou wilt here come off surmounts my reach.

SAMSON. Be of good courage; I begin to feel  
Some rousing motions in me, which dispose  
To something extraordinary my thoughts.  
I with this messenger will go along—  
Nothing to do, be sure, that may dishonor  
Our Law, or stain my vow of Nazarite.  
If there be aught of presage in the mind,  
This day will be remarkable in my life  
By some great act, or of my days the last.

CHORUS. In time thou hast resolved: the man returns.

OFFICER. Samson, this second message from our lords  
To thee I am bid say: Art thou our slave,  
Our captive, at the public mill our drudge,  
And dar'st thou, at our sending and command,  
Dispute thy coming? Come without delay;  
Or we shall find such engines to assail  
And hammer thee, as thou shalt come of force,  
Though thou wert firmlier fastened than a rock.

SAMSON. I could be well content to try their art,  
Which to no few of them would prove pernicious;  
Yet, knowing their advantages too many,  
Because they shall not trail me through their streets  
Like a wild beast, I am content to go.  
Masters' commands come with a power resistless

To such as owe them absolute subjection;  
And for a life who will not change his purpose?  
(So mutable are all the ways of men!)  
Yet this be sure, in nothing to comply  
Scandalous or forbidden in our Law.

OFFICER. I praise thy resolution. Doff these links:  
By this compliance thou wilt win the lords  
To favor, and perhaps to set thee free.

SAMSON. Brethren, farewell. Your company along  
I will not wish, lest it perhaps offend them  
To see me girt with friends; and how the sight  
Of me, as of a common enemy,  
So dreaded once, may now exasperate them  
I know not. Lords are lordliest in their wine;  
And the well-feasted priest then soonest fired  
With zeal, if aught religion seem concerned;  
No less the people, on their holy-days,  
Impetuous, insolent, unquenchable.  
Happen what may, of me expect to hear  
Nothing dishonorable, impure, unworthy  
Our God, our Law, my nation, or myself;  
The last of me or no I cannot warrant.

CHORUS. Go, and the Holy One  
Of Israel be thy guide  
To what may serve his glory best, and spread his name  
Great among the Heathen round;  
Send thee the Angel of thy birth, to stand  
Fast by thy side, who from thy father's field  
Rode up in flames after his message told  
Of thy conception, and be now a shield  
Of fire; that Spirit that first rushed on thee  
In the camp of Dan,  
Be efficacious in thee now at need!  
For never was from Heaven imparted  
Measure of strength so great to mortal seed,  
As in thy wondrous actions hath been seen.  
But wherefore comes old Manoa in such haste

With youthful steps? Much livelier than erewhile  
He seems: supposing here to find his son,  
Or of him bringing to us some glad news?

MANOA. Peace with you, brethren! My inducement hither  
Was not at present here to find my son,  
By order of the lords new parted hence  
To come and play before them at their feast.  
I heard all as I came; the city rings,  
And numbers thither flock; I had no will,  
Lest I should see him forced to things unseemly.  
But that which moved my coming now was chiefly  
To give ye part with me what hope I have  
With good success to work his liberty.

CHORUS. That hope would much rejoice us to partake  
With thee. Say, reverend sire; we thirst to hear.

MANOA. I have attempted, one by one, the lords,  
Either at home, or through the high street passing,  
With supplication prone and father's tears,  
To accept of ransom for my son, their prisoner.  
Some much averse I found, and wondrous harsh,  
Contemptuous, proud, set on revenge and spite;  
That part most revered Dagon and his priests:  
Others more moderate seeming, but their aim  
Private reward, for which both God and State  
They easily would set to sale: a third  
More generous far and civil, who confessed  
They had enough revenged, having reduced  
Their foe to misery beneath their fears;  
The rest was magnanimity to remit,  
If some convenient ransom were proposed.  
What noise or shout was that? It tore the sky.

CHORUS. Doubtless the people shouting to behold  
Their once great dread, captive and blind before them,  
Or at some proof of strength before them shown.

MANOA. His ransom, if my whole inheritance  
May compass it, shall willingly be paid  
And numbered down. Much rather I shall choose

To live the poorest in my tribe, than richest  
And he in that calamitous prison left.  
No, I am fixed not to part hence without him.  
For his redemption all my patrimony,  
If need be, I am ready to forgo  
And quit. Not wanting him, I shall want nothing.

CHORUS. Fathers are wont to lay up for their sons;  
Thou for thy son art bent to lay out all;  
Sons wont to nurse their parents in old age;  
Thou in old age car'st how to nurse thy son,  
Made older than thy age through eye-sight lost.

MANOA. It shall be my delight to tend his eyes,  
And view him sitting in his house, ennobled  
With all those high exploits by him achieved,  
And on his shoulders waving down those locks  
That of a nation armed the strength contained.  
And I persuade me God hath not permitted  
His strength again to grow up with his hair  
Garrisoned round about him like a camp  
Of faithful soldiery, were not his purpose  
To use him further yet in some great service—  
Not to sit idle with so great a gift  
Useless, and thence ridiculous, about him.  
And, since his strength with eye-sight was not lost,  
God will restore him eye-sight to his strength.

CHORUS. Thy hopes are not ill founded, nor seem vain,  
Of his delivery, and thy joy thereon  
Conceived, agreeable to a father's love;  
In both which we, as next, participate.

MANOA. I know your friendly minds, and . . . Oh, what  
noise!  
Mercy of Heaven! what hideous noise was that?  
Horribly loud, unlike the former shout.

CHORUS. Noise call you it, or universal groan,  
As if the whole inhabitation perished?  
Blood, death, and deathful deeds, are in that noise,  
Ruin, destruction at the utmost point.



MANOA. Of ruin indeed methought I heard the noise.  
Oh! it continues; they have slain my son.

CHORUS. Thy son is rather slaying them: that outcry  
From slaughter of one foe could not ascend.

MANOA. Some dismal accident it needs must be.  
What shall we do—stay here, or run and see?

CHORUS. Best keep together here, lest, running thither,  
We unawares run into danger's mouth.

This evil on the Philistines is fallen:

From whom could else a general cry be heard?

The sufferers, then, will scarce molest us here;

From other hands we need not much to fear.

What if, his eye-sight (for to Israel's God

Nothing is hard) by miracle restored,

He now be dealing dole among his foes,

And over heaps of slaughtered walk his way?

MANOA. That were a joy presumptuous to be thought.

CHORUS. Yet God hath wrought things as incredible  
For his people of old; what hinders now?

MANOA. He can, I know, but doubt to think he will;

Yet hope would fain subscribe, and tempts belief.

A little stay will bring some notice hither.

CHORUS. Of good or bad so great, of bad the sooner;

For evil news rides post, while good news baits.

And to our wish I see one hither speeding—

An Ebrew, as I guess, and of our tribe.

MESSENGER. O, whither shall I run, or which way fly

The sight of this so horrid spectacle,

Which erst my eyes beheld, and yet behold?

For dire imagination still pursues me.

But providence or instinct of nature seems,

Or reason, though disturbed and scarce consulted,

To have guided me aright, I know not how,

To thee first, reverend Manoa, and to these

My countrymen, whom here I knew remaining,

As at some distance from the place of horror,

So in the sad event too much concerned.



MANOA. The accident was loud, and here before thee  
With rueful cry; yet what it was we hear not.  
No preface needs; thou seest we long to know.

MESSENGER. It would burst forth; but I recover breath,  
And sense distract, to know well what I utter.

MANOA. Tell us the sum; the circumstance defer.

MESSENGER. Gaza yet stands; but all her sons are fallen,  
All in a moment overwhelmed and fallen.

MANOA. Sad! but thou know'st to Israelites not saddest  
The desolation of a hostile city.

MESSENGER. Feed on that first; there may in grief be  
surfeit.

MANOA. Relate by whom.

MESSENGER. By Samson.

MANOA. That still lessens  
The sorrow, and converts it nigh to joy.

MESSENGER. Ah! Manoa, I refrain too suddenly  
To utter what will come at last too soon,  
Lest evil tidings, with too rude irruption  
Hitting thy aged ear, should pierce too deep.

MANOA. Suspense in news is torture; speak them out.

MESSENGER. Then take the worst in brief: Samson is dead.

MANOA. The worst indeed! Oh, all my hope's defeated  
To free him hence! but Death, who sets all free,  
Hath paid his ransom now and full discharge.  
What windy joy this day had I conceived,  
Hopeful of his delivery, which now proves  
Abortive as the first-born bloom of spring  
Nipt with the lagging rear of winter's frost!  
Yet, ere I give the reins to grief, say first  
How died he; death to life is crown or shame.  
All by him fell, thou say'st; by whom fell he?  
What glorious hand gave Samson his death's wound?

MESSENGER. Unwounded of his enemies he fell.

MANOA. Wearied with slaughter, then, or how? explain.

MESSENGER. By his own hands.

MANOA. Self-violence! What cause

Brought him so soon at variance with himself  
Among his foes?

MESSENGER. Inevitable cause—  
At once both to destroy and be destroyed.  
The edifice, where all were met to see him,  
Upon their heads and on his own he pulled.

MANOA. O lastly over-strong against thyself!  
A dreadful way thou took'st to thy revenge.  
More than enough we know; but, while things yet  
Are in confusion, give us, if thou canst,  
Eye-witness of what first or last was done,  
Relation more particular and distinct.

MESSENGER. Occasions drew me early to this city;  
And, as the gates I entered with sun-rise,  
The morning trumpets festival proclaimed  
Through each high street. Little I had dispatched,  
When all abroad was rumored that this day  
Samson should be brought forth, to show the people  
Proof of his mighty strength in feats and games.  
I sorrowed at his captive state, but minded  
Not to be absent at that spectacle.  
The building was a spacious theatre,  
Half round on two main pillars vaulted high,  
With seats where all the lords, and each degree  
Of sort, might sit in order to behold;  
The other side was open, where the throng  
On banks and scaffolds under sky might stand:  
I among these aloof obscurely stood.  
The feast and noon grew high, and sacrifice  
Had filled their hearts with mirth, high cheer, and wine,  
When to their sports they turned. Immediately  
Was Samson as a public servant brought,  
In their state livery clad: before him pipes  
And timbrels; on each side went armed guards;  
Both horse and foot before him and behind,  
Archers and slingers, cataphracts, and spears.  
At sight of him the people with a shout

Rifted the air, clamoring their god with praise,  
Who had made their dreadful enemy their thrall.  
He patient, but undaunted, where they led him,  
Came to the place; and what was set before him,  
Which without help of eye might be assayed,  
To heave, pull, draw, or break, he still performed  
All with incredible, stupendious force,  
None daring to appear antagonist.  
At length, for intermission sake, they led him  
Between the pillars; he his guide requested  
(For so from such as nearer stood we heard),  
As over-tired, to let him lean a while  
With both his arms on those two massy pillars,  
That to the arched roof gave main support.  
He unsuspecting led him; which when Samson  
Felt in his arms, with head a while inclined,  
And eyes fast fixed, he stood, as one who prayed,  
Or some great matter in his mind revolved:  
At last, with head erect, thus cried aloud:—  
“Hitherto, Lords, what your commands imposed  
I have performed, as reason was, obeying,  
Not without wonder or delight beheld;  
Now, of my own accord, such other trial  
I mean to show you of my strength yet greater  
As with amaze shall strike all who behold.”  
This uttered, straining all his nerves, he bowed;  
As with the force of winds and waters pent  
When mountains tremble, those two massy pillars  
With horrible convulsion to and fro  
He tugged, he shook, till down they came, and drew  
The whole roof after them with burst of thunder  
Upon the heads of all who sat beneath,  
Lords, ladies, captains, counsellors, or priests,  
Their choice nobility and flower, not only  
Of this, but each Philistian city round,  
Met from all parts to solemnize this feast.  
Samson, with these immixed, inevitably

Pulled down the same destruction on himself;  
The vulgar only scaped, who stood without.

CHORUS. O dearly bought revenge, yet glorious!  
Living or dying thou hast fulfilled  
The work for which thou wast foretold  
To Israel, and now liest victorious  
Among thy slain self-killed;  
Not willingly, but tangled in the fold  
Of dire Necessity, whose law in death conjoined  
Thee with thy slaughtered foes, in number more  
Than all thy life had slain before.

SEMICHORUS. While their hearts were jocund and sublime,  
Drunk with idolatry, drunk with wine  
And fat regorged of bulls and goats,  
Chaunting their idol, and preferring  
Before our living Dread, who dwells  
In Silo, his bright sanctuary,  
Among them he a spirit of phrenzy sent,  
Who hurt their minds,  
And urged them on with mad desire  
To call in haste for their destroyer.  
They, only set on sport and play,  
Unweetingly importuned  
Their own destruction to come speedy upon them.  
So fond are mortal men,  
Fallen into wrath divine,  
As their own ruin on themselves to invite,  
Insensate left, or to sense reprobate,  
And with blindness internal struck.

SEMICHORUS. But he, though blind of sight,  
Despised, and thought extinguished quite,  
With inward eyes illuminated,  
His fiery virtue roused  
From under ashes into sudden flame,  
And as an evening dragon came,  
Assailant on the perched roosts  
And nests in order ranged

Of tame villatic fowl, but as an eagle  
His cloudless thunder bolted on their heads.  
So Virtue, given for lost,  
Depressed and overthrown, as seemed,  
Like that self-begotten bird  
In the Arabian woods embost,  
That no second knows nor third,  
And lay erewhile a holocaust,  
From out her ashy womb now teemed,  
Revives, reflourishes, then vigorous most  
When most unactive deemed;  
And, though her body die, her fame survives,  
A secular bird, ages of lives.

MANOA. Come, come; no time for lamentation now,  
Nor much more cause. Samson hath quit himself  
Like Samson, and heroically hath finished  
A life heroic, on his enemies  
Fully revenged—hath left them years of mourning,  
And lamentation to the sons of Caphtor  
Through all Philistian bounds; to Israel  
Honor hath left and freedom, let but them  
Find courage to lay hold on this occasion;  
To himself and father's house eternal fame;  
And, which is best and happiest yet, all this  
With God not parted from him, as was feared,  
But favoring and assisting to the end.  
Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail  
Or knock the breast; no weakness, no contempt,  
Dispraise, or blame; nothing but well and fair,  
And what may quiet us in a death so noble.  
Let us go find the body where it lies  
Soaked in his enemies' blood, and from the stream  
With lavers pure, and cleansing herbs, wash off  
The clotted gore. I, with what speed the while  
(Gaza is not in plight to say us nay),  
Will send for all my kindred, all my friends,  
To fetch him hence, and solemnly attend,

With silent obsequy and funeral train,  
Home to his father's house. There will I build him  
A monument, and plant it round with shade  
Of laurel ever green and branching palm,  
With all his trophies hung, and acts enrolled  
In copious legend, or sweet lyric song.  
Thither shall all the valiant youth resort,  
And from his memory inflame their breasts  
To matchless valour and adventures high;  
The virgins also shall, on feastful days,  
Visit his tomb with flowers, only bewailing  
His lot unfortunate in nuptial choice,  
From whence captivity and loss of eyes.

CHORUS. All is best, though we oft doubt  
What the unsearchable dispose  
Of Highest Wisdom brings about,  
And ever best found in the close.  
Oft He seems to hide his face,  
But unexpectedly returns,  
And to his faithful champion hath in place  
Bore witness gloriously; whence Gaza mourns.  
And all that band them to resist  
His uncontrollable intent.  
His servants He, with new acquist  
Of true experience from this great event,  
With peace and consolation hath dismissed,  
And calm of mind, all passion spent.





MANFRED

BY

GEORGE GORDON BYRON

(1817)



## INTRODUCTION

The dramatic poem, *Manfred*, published in 1817, may be considered Byron's nearest approach to a drama of philosophical importance. Perhaps too much has been made by Matthew Arnold and other critics of Goethe's famous dictum on Byron's reflective powers; "So bald er reflectirt ist er ein Kind", "As soon as he thinks he is a child", for Goethe did not hesitate to express frequently a warm admiration of Byron the man, as well as of Byron the poet. Of *Manfred* in particular he wrote:

"A wonderful phenomenon, and one that closely touched me, was Byron's tragedy of *Manfred*. This singular poetic genius has taken my Faust to himself and extracted therefrom the strangest nourishment for his hypochondriac humor. Of such motives as correspond to his purpose he has made use after his own manner, and in such a way that no one of them remains the same; and for that very reason I cannot enough admire his genius."

On another occasion when Eckermann raised the question whether a decided gain could be derived from Byron's writings, Goethe replied:

"There I must contradict you; the audacity and grandeur of Byron must certainly tend towards culture. We should take care not to be always looking for it in the decidedly pure and moral. . . . Everything that is great promotes cultivation as soon as we are aware of it."

In this poetic drama, as in Goethe's *Faust*, is revealed a man who has gone through the experiences of this world only to find no durable satisfaction, no answer to the riddles of existence. Manfred is the Byronic hero turned philosopher. Having drunk the wine of life and found the dregs bitter, he has rejected the world of men, and turned in melancholy and weariness from his sinful, mysterious past to a search for oblivion. Solitary and friendless (p. 310), he tries to find

relief from his miseries by losing himself in the wonders of Nature. They are beautiful, but they do not satisfy (p. 302). Like Faust's, his pursuit of knowledge is also fruitless (p. 293). Not wholly free from the passions of men, he tries to find a solution in love, but succeeds only in sacrificing his beloved, the lost Astarte (p. 312). "Each man kills the thing he loves." Finding in all these things no meaning in life, he sees only one thing left, self-oblivion. The ready means to this, he thinks, is suicide (p. 298), but reflection upon it raises the same doubts that troubled Hamlet. The soul may be immortal, and the future therefore be worse than the past and the present (p. 298). As Hamlet says:

"But that the dread of something after death,  
The undiscover'd country from whose bourn  
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,  
And makes us rather bear those ills we have  
Than fly to others that we know not of."

Like Faust, Manfred seeks aid from the supernatural spirits of earth. In vain they offer him all they have, worldly sovereignty and power, but they cannot give him what he craves, self-oblivion. He then asks Nemesis to summon the spirit of his lost Astarte (p. 323), but she can give no help, not even the assurance that she has forgiven his crime. Woman in this play is not, as in Goethe's *Faust*, the guiding star to salvation. Finally, as the hour of Manfred's doom approaches, the Abbot of the Church comes with his official proffer of salvation in exchange for sincere repentance. But Manfred, like Marlowe's Dr. Faustus, will not repent. He steadfastly refuses to buy salvation by a compact with the Abbot which would necessitate abnegating his intellectual independence. In the strongest passage of the poem (p. 337), Manfred takes his stand upon the utter independence and integrity of the individual soul. When Satan, with other Devils from Hell, comes to claim Manfred's soul because of his wicked life, he does not, like Dr. Faustus, cry to God for Mercy; he turns upon the Devils with defiance and bids them be gone, for the evil he did was not by any compact with Hell, but by his own free choice, just as any good he ever did was of his own volition and not through any compact with

Heaven. If the will is free, every man is responsible for his destiny, if the will is not free, no man is responsible for his destiny. Manfred, like the Prometheus of Aeschylus, and the Job of the Symposium, places his confidence in the unshakable and unassailable freedom of the will, which neither God nor Devil can assail or impair, and he goes to his death in proud defiance, telling the astonished and troubled Abbot:

"Old man, 'tis not so difficult to die."

A similar expression of the unconquerable soul of man is uttered in Henley's "Invictus":

"It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate:  
I am the captain of my soul."

The audacious defiance of Byron's rebellion against the authority of state, church, and society gave him twin membership with Shelley in Southey's "Satanic School" of poetry; and both became anathema to the Englishmen of their day. Since then, their stars have become fixed in the galaxy of the poetic firmament. In spite of affectation, sentimentality, and egotism, Byron's poetry continues to reveal "the imperishable excellencies of sincerity and strength".

In Byron's interesting tribute to Prometheus, which is subjoined, we find the same admiration for the Spirit of man "equal to all woes", "triumphant where it dare defy, and making Death a Victory." This poem, however, strikes an additional humanitarian note absent in *Manfred*, namely, that Promethean rebellion not only defies Fate, but lessens "the sum of human wretchedness". This is the theme of the next lyric drama, Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*.

Another drama of philosophic rebellion is Byron's *Cain* (1821). Byron's life is the subject of numerous biographies. See those written by Thomas Moore, Trelawney, E. C. Mayne; also John Drinkwater's *Pilgrim of Eternity*. A good short review of his life, work and influence is given by George Brandes in "Naturalism in England", in *Main Currents of Nineteenth Century Literature* (Macmillan, New York, 1906), Vol. IV.



TEXT OF THE PLAY



## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MANFRED

CHAMOIS HUNTER

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE

MANUEL

HERMAN

WITCH OF THE ALPS

ARIMANES

NEMESIS

THE DESTINIES

SPIRITS, &c.

*The Scene of the Drama is amongst the Higher Alps—  
partly in the Castle of Manfred, and partly in the Mountains.*

## MANFRED

### A Dramatic Poem

---

“There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,  
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.”

---

### ACT I

SCENE I—MANFRED *alone*.—*Scene, a Gothic Gallery.—  
Time, Midnight.*

MANFRED. The lamp must be replenish'd, but even then  
It will not burn so long as I must watch:  
My slumbers—if I slumber—are not sleep,  
But a continuance of enduring thought,  
Which then I can resist not: in my heart  
There is a vigil, and these eyes but close  
To look within; and yet I live, and bear  
The aspect and the form of breathing men.  
But grief should be the instructor of the wise;  
Sorrow is knowledge: they who know the most  
Must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal truth,  
The Tree of Knowledge is not that of Life.  
Philosophy and science, and the springs  
Of wonder, and the wisdom of the world,  
I have essay'd, and in my mind there is  
A power to make these subject to itself—  
But they avail not: I have done men good,  
And I have met with good even among men—  
But this avail'd not: I have had my foes,  
And none have baffled, many fallen before me—

But this avail'd not:—Good, or evil, life,  
 Powers, passions, all I see in other beings,  
 Have been to me as rain unto the sands,  
 Since that all-nameless hour. I have no dread,  
 And feel the curse to have no natural fear,  
 Nor fluttering throb, that beats with hopes or wishes,  
 Or lurking love of something on the earth.  
 Now to my task.—

Mysterious agency!

Ye spirits of the unbounded Universe!  
 Whom I have sought in darkness and in light—  
 Ye, who do compass earth about, and dwell  
 In subtler essence—ye, to whom the tops  
 Of mountains inaccessible are haunts,  
 And earth's and ocean's caves familiar things—  
 I call upon ye by the written charm  
 Which gives me power upon you—Rise! Appear! [A pause.]  
 They come not yet.—Now by the voice of him  
 Who is the first among you—by this sign,  
 Which makes you tremble—by the claims of him  
 Who is undying,—Rise! Appear!—Appear! [A pause.]  
 If it be so—Spirits of earth and air,  
 Ye shall not thus elude me: by a power,  
 Deeper than all yet urged, a tyrant-spell,  
 Which had its birthplace in a star condemn'd,  
 The burning wreck of a demolish'd world,  
 A wandering hell in the eternal space;  
 By the strong curse which is upon my soul,  
 The thought which is within me and around me,  
 I do compel ye to my will—Appear!

[A star is seen at the darker end of the gallery: it is stationary; and a voice is heard singing.]

FIRST SPIRIT

Mortal! to thy bidding bow'd,  
 From my mansion in the cloud,

Which the breath of twilight builds,  
And the summer's sunset gilds  
With the azure and vermilion,  
Which is mix'd for my pavilion;  
Though thy quest may be forbidden,  
On a star-beam I have ridden:  
To thine adjuration bow'd,  
Mortal—be thy wish avow'd!

## SECOND SPIRIT

Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains;  
They crown'd him long ago  
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,  
With a diadem of snow.  
Around his waist are forests braced,  
The Avalanche in his hand;  
But ere it fall, that thundering ball  
Must pause for my command.  
The Glacier's cold and restless mass  
Moves onward day by day;  
But I am he who bids it pass,  
Or with its ice delay.  
I am the spirit of the place,  
Could make the mountain bow  
And quiver to his cavern'd base—  
And what with me wouldst *Thou*?

## THIRD SPIRIT

In the blue depth of the waters,  
Where the wave hath no strife,  
Where the wind is a stranger,  
And the sea-snake hath life,  
Where the Mermaid is decking  
Her green hair with shells,  
Like the storm on the surface  
Came the sound of thy spells;

O'er my calm Hall of Coral  
The deep echo roll'd—  
To the Spirit of Ocean  
Thy wishes unfold!

## FOURTH SPIRIT

Where the slumbering earthquake  
Lies pillow'd on fire,  
And the lakes of bitumen  
Rise boilingly higher;  
Where the roots of the Andes  
Strike deep in the earth,  
As their summits to heaven  
Shoot soaringly forth;  
I have quitted my birthplace,  
Thy bidding to bide—  
Thy spell hath subdued me,  
Thy will be my guide!

## FIFTH SPIRIT

I am the Rider of the wind,  
The stirrer of the storm;  
The hurricane I left behind  
Is yet with lightning warm;  
To speed to thee, o'er shore and sea  
I swept upon the blast:  
The fleet I met sail'd well, and yet  
'Twill sink ere night be past.

## SIXTH SPIRIT

My dwelling is the shadow of the night,  
Why doth thy magic torture me with light?

## SEVENTH SPIRIT

The star which rules thy destiny  
Was ruled, ere earth began, by me:

It was a world as fresh and fair  
 As e'er revolved round sun in air;  
 Its course was free and regular,  
 Space bosom'd not a lovelier star.  
 The hour arrived—and it became  
 A wandering mass of shapeless flame,  
 A pathless comet, and a curse,  
 The menace of the universe;  
 Still rolling on with innate force,  
 Without a sphere, without a course,  
 A bright deformity on high,  
 The monster of the upper sky!  
 And thou! beneath its influence born—  
 Thou worm! whom I obey and scorn—  
 Forced by a power (which is not thine,  
 And lent thee but to make thee mine)  
 For this brief moment to descend,  
 Where these weak spirits round thee bend  
 And parley with a thing like thee—  
 What wouldst thou, Child of Clay! with me?

*The SEVEN SPIRITS*

Earth, ocean, air, night, mountains, winds, thy star,  
 Are at thy beck and bidding, Child of Clay!  
 Before thee at thy quest their spirits are—  
 What wouldst thou with us, son of mortals—say?

MANFRED. Forgetfulness——

FIRST SPIRIT. Of what—of whom—and why?

MANFRED. Of that which is within me; read it there—  
 Ye know it, and I cannot utter it.

SPIRIT. We can but give thee that which we possess:  
 Ask of us subjects, sovereignty, the power  
 O'er earth—the whole, or portion—or a sign  
 Which shall control the elements, whereof  
 We are the dominators,—each and all,  
 These shall be thine.

MANFRED. Oblivion, self-oblivion!  
Can ye not wring from out the hidden realms  
Ye offer so profusely what I ask?

SPIRIT. It is not in our essence, in our skill;  
But—thou may'st die.

MANFRED. Will death bestow it on me?

SPIRIT. We are immortal, and do not forget;  
We are eternal; and to us the past  
Is, as the future, present. Art thou answer'd?

MANFRED. Ye mock me—but the power which brought ye  
here

Hath made you mine. Slaves, scoff not at my will!  
The mind, the spirit, the Promethean spark,  
The lightning of my being, is as bright,  
Pervading, and far darting as your own,  
And shall not yield to yours, though coop'd in clay!  
Answer, or I will teach you what I am.

SPIRIT. We answer as we answer'd; our reply  
Is even in thine own words.

MANFRED. Why say ye so?

SPIRIT. If, as thou say'st, thine essence be as ours,  
We have replied in telling thee, the thing  
Mortals call death hath nought to do with us.

MANFRED. I then have call'd ye from your realms in  
vain;

Ye cannot, or ye will not, aid me.

SPIRIT. Say,

What we possess we offer; it is thine:  
Bethink ere thou dismiss us; ask again;  
Kingdom, and sway, and strength, and length of days——

MANFRED. Accursed! what have I to do with days?  
They are too long already.—Hence—begone!

SPIRIT. Yet pause: being here, our will would do thee  
service;

Bethink thee, is there then no other gift  
Which we can make not worthless in thine eyes?

MANFRED. No, none: yet stay—one moment, ere we part,





There are shades which will not vanish,  
There are thoughts thou canst not banish;  
By a power to thee unknown,  
Thou canst never be alone;  
Thou art wrapt as with a shroud,  
Thou art gather'd in a cloud;  
And for ever shalt thou dwell  
In the spirit of this spell.

Though thou seest me not pass by,  
Thou shalt feel me with thine eye  
As a thing that, though unseen,  
Must be near thee, and hath been;  
And when in that secret dread  
Thou hast turn'd around thy head,  
Thou shalt marvel I am not  
As thy shadow on the spot,  
And the power which thou dost feel  
Shall be what thou must conceal.

And a magic voice and verse  
Hath baptized thee with a curse;  
And a spirit of the air  
Hath begirt thee with a snare;  
In the wind there is a voice  
Shall forbid thee to rejoice;  
And to thee shall night deny  
All the quiet of her sky;  
And the day shall have a sun,  
Which shall make thee wish it done.

From thy false tears I did distil  
An essence which hath strength to kill;  
From thy own heart I then did wring  
The black blood in its blackest spring;  
From thy own smile I snatch'd the snake,  
For there it coil'd as in a brake;

From thy own lip I drew the charm  
Which gave all these their chiefest harm;  
In proving every poison known,  
I found the strongest was thine own.

By thy cold breast and serpent smile,  
By thy unfathom'd gulfs of guile,  
By that most seeming virtuous eye,  
By thy shut soul's hypocrisy;  
By the perfection of thine art  
Which pass'd for human thine own heart;  
By thy delight in others' pain,  
And by thy brotherhood of Cain,  
I call upon thee! and compel  
Thyself to be thy proper Hell!

And on thy head I pour the vial  
Which doth devote thee to this trial;  
Nor to slumber, nor to die,  
Shall be in thy destiny;  
Though thy death shall still seem near  
To thy wish, but as a fear;  
Lo! the spell now works around thee,  
And the clankless chain hath bound thee;  
O'er thy heart and brain together  
Hath the word been pass'd—now wither!

SCENE. II.—*The Mountain of the Jungfrau.—Time, Morning.*—MANFRED alone upon the Cliffs.

MANFRED. The spirits I have raised abandon me,  
The spells which I have studied baffle me,  
The remedy I reck'd of tortured me;  
I lean no more on superhuman aid;  
It hath no power upon the past, and for  
The future, till the past be gulf'd in darkness,  
It is not of my search. My mother Earth!  
And thou fresh breaking Day, and you, ye Mountains,

Why are ye beautiful? I cannot love ye.  
And thou, the bright eye of the universe,  
That openest over all, and unto all  
Art a delight—thou shin'st not on my heart.  
And you, ye crags, upon whose extreme edge  
I stand, and on the torrent's brink beneath  
Behold the tall pines dwindled as to shrubs  
In dizziness of distance; when a leap,  
A stir, a motion, even a breath, would bring  
My breast upon its rocky bosom's bed  
To rest for ever—wherefore do I pause?  
I feel the impulse—yet I do not plunge;  
I see the peril—yet do not recede;  
And my brain reels—and yet my foot is firm:  
There is a power upon me which withholds,  
And makes it my fatality to live,—  
If it be life to wear within myself  
This barrenness of spirit, and to be  
My own soul's sepulchre, for I have ceased  
To justify my deeds unto myself—  
The last infirmity of evil. Ay,  
Thou winged and cloud-cleaving minister,

[*An eagle passes.*]

Whose happy flight is highest into heaven,  
Well may'st thou swoop so near me—I should be  
Thy prey, and gorge thine eaglets; thou art gone  
Where the eye cannot follow thee; but thine  
Yet pierces downward, onward, or above,  
With a pervading vision.—Beautiful!  
How beautiful is all this visible world!  
How glorious in its action and itself!  
But we, who name ourselves its sovereigns, we,  
Half dust, half deity, alike unfit  
To sink or soar, with our mix'd essence make  
A conflict of its elements, and breathe  
The breath of degradation and of pride,

Contending with low wants and lofty will,  
 Till our mortality predominates,  
 And men are—what they name not to themselves,  
 And trust not to each other. Hark! the note,

[*The Shepherd's pipe in the distance is heard.*]

The natural music of the mountain reed—  
 For here the patriarchal days are not  
 A pastoral fable—pipes in the liberal air,  
 Mix'd with the sweet bells of the sauntering herd;  
 My soul would drink those echoes. Oh, that I were  
 The viewless spirit of a lovely sound,  
 A living voice, a breathing harmony,  
 A bodiless enjoyment—born and dying  
 With the blest tone which made me!

[*Enter from below a CHAMOIS HUNTER.*]

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Even so

This way the chamois leapt: her nimble feet  
 Have baffled me; my gains to-day will scarce  
 Repay my break-neck travail.—What is here?  
 Who seems not of my trade, and yet hath reach'd  
 A height which none even of our mountaineers,  
 Save our best hunters, may attain: his garb  
 Is goodly, his mien manly, and his air  
 Proud as a free-born peasant's, at this distance:  
 I will approach him nearer.

MANFRED [*not perceiving the other*]. To be thus—  
 Gray-hair'd with anguish, like these blasted pines,  
 Wrecks of a single winter, barkless, branchless,  
 A blighted trunk upon a cursed root,  
 Which but supplies a feeling to decay—  
 And to be thus, eternally but thus,  
 Having been otherwise! now furrow'd o'er  
 With wrinkles, plough'd by moments,—not by years,—  
 And hours, all tortured into ages—hours  
 Which I outlive!—Ye toppling crags of ice!

Ye avalanches, whom a breath draws down  
In mountainous o'erwhelming, come and crush me!  
I hear ye momentarily above, beneath,  
Crash with a frequent conflict; but ye pass,  
And only fall on things that still would live;  
On the young flourishing forest, or the hut  
And hamlet of the harmless villager.

CHAMOIS HUNTER. The mists begin to rise from up the  
valley;

I'll warn him to descend, or he may chance  
To lose at once his way and life together.

MANFRED. The mists boil up around the glaciers; clouds  
Rise curling fast beneath me, white and sulphury,  
Like foam from the roused ocean of deep Hell,  
Whose every wave breaks on a living shore,  
Heap'd with the damn'd like pebbles.—I am giddy.

CHAMOIS HUNTER. I must approach him cautiously; if  
near,  
A sudden step will startle him, and he  
Seems tottering already.

MANFRED. Mountains have fallen,  
Leaving a gap in the clouds, and with the shock  
Rocking their alpine brethren; filling up  
The ripe green valleys with destruction's splinters;  
Damming the rivers with a sudden dash,  
Which crush'd the waters into mist and made  
Their fountains find another channel—thus,  
Thus, in its old age, did Mount Rosenberg—  
Why stood I not beneath it?

CHAMOIS HUNTER. Friend! have a care,  
Your next step may be fatal!—for the love  
Of him who made you, stand not on that brink!

MANFRED (*not hearing him*). Such would have been for  
me a fitting tomb;  
My bones had then been quite in their depth;  
They had not then been strewn upon the rocks  
For the wind's pastime—as thus—thus they shall be—

In this one plunge.—Farewell, ye opening heavens!  
 Look not upon me thus reproachfully—  
 You were not meant for me—Earth! take these atoms!

[*As MANFRED is in act to spring from the cliff, the  
 CHAMOIS HUNTER seizes and retains him with  
 a sudden grasp.*]

CHAMOIS HUNTER. Hold, madman!—though aweary of thy  
 life,

Stain not our pure vales with thy guilty blood:  
 Away with me—I will not quit my hold.

MANFRED. I am most sick at heart—nay, grasp me not—  
 I am all feebleness—the mountains whirl  
 Spinning around me—I grow blind—What art thou?

CHAMOIS HUNTER. I'll answer that anon. Away with  
 me—

The clouds grow thicker——there—now lean on me—  
 Place your foot here—here, take this staff, and cling  
 A moment to that shrub—now give me your hand,  
 And hold fast by my girdle—softly—well—  
 The Chalet will be gain'd within an hour:  
 Come on, we'll quickly find a surer footing,  
 And something like a pathway, which the torrent  
 Hath wash'd since winter.—Come, 'tis bravely done—  
 You should have been a hunter.—Follow me.

[*As they descend the rocks with  
 difficulty, the scene closes.*]

## ACT II

SCENE I.—*A Cottage amongst the Bernese Alps.*

[*MANFRED and the CHAMOIS HUNTER.*]

CHAMOIS HUNTER. No, no—yet pause—thou must not yet  
 go forth:



Thy mind and body are alike unfit  
To trust each other, for some hours, at least;  
When thou art better, I will be thy guide—  
But whither?

MANFRED. It imports not: I do know  
My route full well, and need no further guidance.

CHAMOIS HUNTER. Thy garb and gait bespeak thee of high  
lineage—

One of the many chiefs, whose castled crags  
Look o'er the lower valleys—which of these  
May call thee lord? I only know their portals;  
My way of life leads me but rarely down  
To bask by the huge hearths of those old halls,  
Carousing with the vassals; but the paths,  
Which step from out our mountains to their doors,  
I know from childhood—which of these is thine?

MANFRED. No matter.

CHAMOIS HUNTER. Well, sir, pardon me the question,  
And be of better cheer. Come, taste my wine;  
'Tis of an ancient vintage; many a day  
'T has thaw'd my veins among our glaciers  
Let it do thus for thine—Come, pledge me fairly.

MANFRED. Away, away! there's blood upon the brim!  
Will it then never—never sink in the earth?

CHAMOIS HUNTER. What dost thou mean? thy senses wander from thee.

MANFRED. I say 'tis blood—my blood! the pure warm  
stream

Which ran in the veins of my fathers, and in ours  
When we were in our youth, and had one heart,  
And loved each other as we should not love,  
And this was shed: but still it rises up,  
Coloring the clouds, that shut me out from heaven,  
Where thou art not—and I shall never be.

CHAMOIS HUNTER. Man of strange words, and some half-  
maddening sin,  
Which makes thee people vacancy, whate'er

Thy dread and sufferance be, there's comfort yet—  
The aid of holy men, and heavenly patience—

MANFRED.                      Patience and patience!—

Hence—that word was made  
For brutes of burthen, not for birds of prey;  
Preach it to mortals of a dust like thine,—  
I am not of thine order.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.      Thanks to heaven!  
I would not be of thine for the free fame  
Of William Tell; but whatsoe'er thine ill,  
It must be borne, and these wild starts are useless.

MANFRED. Do I not bear it?—Look on me—I live.

CHAMOIS HUNTER. This is convulsion, and no healthful  
life.

MANFRED. I tell thee, man! I have lived many years,  
Many long years, but they are nothing now  
To those which I must number: ages—ages—  
Space and eternity—and consciousness,  
With the fierce thirst of death—and still unslaked!

CHAMOIS HUNTER. Why, on thy brow the seal of middle  
age

Hath scarce been set; I am thine elder far.

MANFRED. Think'st thou existence doth depend on time?  
It doth; but actions are our epochs: mine  
Have made my days and nights imperishable,  
Endless, and all alike, as sands on the shore,  
Innumerable atoms; and one desert,  
Barren and cold, on which the wild waves break,  
But nothing rests, save carcasses and wrecks,  
Rocks and the salt-surf weeds of bitterness.

CHAMOIS HUNTER. Alas! he's mad—but yet I must not  
leave him.

MANFRED. I would I were—for then the things I see  
Would be but a distemper'd dream.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.                      What is it  
That thou dost see, or think thou look'st upon?

MANFRED. Myself, and thee—a peasant of the Alps—

Thy humble virtues, hospitable home,  
 And spirit patient, pious, proud, and free;  
 Thy self-respect, grafted on innocent thoughts;  
 The days of health, and nights of sleep; thy toils,  
 By danger dignified, yet guiltless; hopes  
 Of cheerful old age and a quiet grave,  
 With cross and garland over its green turf,  
 And thy grandchildren's love for epitaph!  
 This do I see—and then I look within—  
 It matters not—my soul was scorch'd already!

CHAMOIS HUNTER. And wouldst thou then exchange thy  
 lot for mine?

MANFRED. No, friend! I would not wrong thee, nor ex-  
 change

My lot with living being: I can bear—  
 However wretchedly, 'tis still to bear—  
 In life what others could not brook to dream,  
 But perish in their slumber.

CHAMOIS HUNTER. And with this—  
 This cautious feeling for another's pain,  
 Canst thou be black with evil?—say not so  
 Can one of gentle thoughts have wreck'd revenge  
 Upon his enemies?

MANFRED. Oh! no, no, no!  
 My injuries came down on those who loved me—  
 On those whom I best loved: I never quelled  
 An enemy, save in my just defence—  
 But my embrace was fatal.

CHAMOIS HUNTER. Heaven give thee rest!  
 And penitence restore thee to thyself;  
 My prayers shall be for thee.

MANFRED. I need them not—  
 But can endure thy pity. I depart—  
 'Tis time—farewell!—Here's gold, and thanks for thee—  
 No words—it is thy due.—Follow me not—  
 I know my path—the mountain peril's past:  
 And once again I charge thee, follow not! [*Exit MANFRED.*]

SCENE II.—*A lower Valley in the Alps.—Cataract.*[*Enter MANFRED.*]

It is not noon—the sunbow's rays still arch  
The torrent with the many hues of heaven,  
And roll the sheeted silver's waving column  
O'er the crag's headlong perpendicular,  
And fling its lines of foaming light along,  
And to and fro, like the pale courser's tail,  
The Giant steed, to be bestrode by Death,  
As told in the Apocalypse. No eyes  
But mine now drink this sight of loveliness;  
I should be sole in this sweet solitude,  
And with the Spirit of the place divide  
The homage of these waters.—I will call her.

[*MANFRED takes some of the water into the palm of his hand, and flings it into the air, muttering the adjuration. After a pause, the WITCH OF THE ALPS rises beneath the arch of the sunbow of the torrent.*]

Beautiful Spirit! with thy hair of light,  
And dazzling eyes of glory, in whose form  
The charms of earth's least mortal daughters grow  
To an unearthly stature, in an essence  
Of purer elements; while the hues of youth,—  
Carnation'd like a sleeping infant's cheek,  
Rock'd by the beating of her mother's heart,  
Or the rose tints, which summer's twilight leaves  
Upon the lofty glacier's virgin snow,  
The blush of earth embracing with her heaven—  
Tinge thy celestial aspect, and make tame  
The beauties of the sunbow which bends o'er thee.  
Beautiful Spirit! in thy calm clear brow,  
Wherein is glass'd serenity of soul,

Which of itself shows immortality,  
I read that thou wilt pardon to a Son  
Of Earth, whom the abstruser powers permit  
At times to commune with them—if that he  
Avail him of his spells—to call thee thus,  
And gaze on thee a moment.

WITCH.

Son of Earth!

I know thee, and the powers which give thee power;  
I know thee for a man of many thoughts,  
And deeds of good and ill, extreme in both,  
Fatal and fated in thy sufferings.

I have expected this—what wouldst thou with me?

MANFRED. To look upon thy beauty—nothing further.  
The face of the earth hath madden'd me, and I  
Take refuge in her mysteries, and pierce  
To the abodes of those who govern her—  
But they can nothing aid me. I have sought  
From them what they could not bestow, and now  
I search no further.

WITCH.

What could be the quest

Which is not in the power of the most powerful,  
The rulers of the invisible?

MANFRED.

A boon;

But why should I repeat it? 'twere in vain.

WITCH. I know not that; let thy lips utter it.

MANFRED. Well, though it torture me, 'tis but the same;  
My pang shall find a voice. From my youth upwards  
My spirit walk'd not with the souls of men,  
Nor look'd upon the earth with human eyes;  
The thirst of their ambition was not mine,  
The aim of their existence was not mine;  
My joys, my griefs, my passions, and my powers,  
Made me a stranger; though I wore the form,  
I had no sympathy with breathing flesh,  
Nor midst the creatures of clay that girded me  
Was there but one who—but of her anon.  
I said with men, and with the thoughts of men,

I held but slight communion; but instead  
My joy was in the wilderness,—to breathe  
The difficult air of the iced mountain's top,  
Where the birds dare not build, nor insect's wing  
Flit o'er the herbless granite; or to plunge  
Into the torrent, and to roll along  
On the swift whirl of the new breaking wave  
Of river-stream, or ocean, in their flow.  
In these my early strength exulted; or  
To follow through the night the moving moon,  
The stars and their development; or catch  
The dazzling lightnings till my eyes grew dim;  
Or to look, list'ning, on the scattered leaves,  
While Autumn winds were at their evening song.  
These were my pastimes, and to be alone;  
For if the beings, of whom I was one,—  
Hating to be so,—cross'd me in my path,  
I felt myself degraded back to them,  
And was all clay again. And then I dived,  
In my lone wanderings, to the caves of death,  
Searching its cause in its effect; and drew  
From wither'd bones, and skull, and heap'd up dust,  
Conclusions most forbidden. Then I pass'd  
The nights of years in sciences untaught  
Save in the old time; and with time and toil,  
And terrible ordeal, and such penance  
As in itself hath power upon the air,  
And spirits that do compass air and earth,  
Space, and the peopled infinite, I made  
Mine eyes familiar with Eternity,  
Such as, before me, did the Magi, and  
He who from out their fountain dwellings raised  
Eros and Anteros, at Gadara,  
As I do thee;—and with my knowledge grew  
The thirst of knowledge, and the power and joy  
Of this most bright intelligence, until—  
WITCH. Proceed.



MANFRED. Oh! I but thus prolong'd my words,  
Boasting these idle attributes, because  
As I approach the core of my heart's grief—  
But to my task, I have not named to thee  
Father or mother, mistress, friend, or being,  
With whom I wore the chain of human ties;  
If I had such, they seem'd not such to me;  
Yet there was one—

WITCH. Spare not thyself—proceed.

MANFRED. She was like me in lineaments; her eyes,  
Her hair, her features, all, to the very tone  
Even of her voice, they said were like to mine;  
But soften'd all, and temper'd into beauty:  
She had the same lone thoughts and wanderings,  
The quest of hidden knowledge, and a mind  
To comprehend the universe: nor these  
Alone, but with them gentler powers than mine,  
Pity, and smiles, and tears—which I had not;  
And tenderness—but that I had for her;  
Humility—and that I never had.  
Her faults were mine—her virtues were her own—  
I loved her, and destroy'd her!

WITCH.

With thy hand?

MANFRED. Not with my hand, but heart, which broke her  
heart;

It gazed on mine, and wither'd. I have shed  
Blood, but not hers—and yet her blood was shed;  
I saw—and could not stanch it.

WITCH.

And for this—

A being of the race thou dost despise,  
The order, which thine own would rise above,  
Mingling with us and ours,—thou dost forego  
The gifts of our great knowledge, and shrink'st back  
To recreant mortality—Away!

MANFRED. Daughter of Air! I tell thee, since that hour—  
But words are breath—look on me in my sleep,  
Or watch my watchings—Come and sit by me!



WITCH.                         It may be  
That I can aid thee.

WITCH. That is not in my province; but if thou wilt swear obedience to my will, and do my bidding, it may help thee to thy wishes.

WITCH. Is this all?  
Hast thou no gentler answer?—Yet bethink thee,  
And pause ere thou rejectest.

MANFRED. I have said it.

WITCH. Enough! I may retire then—say!

MANFRED.

Retire!

[*The WITCH disappears.*]

MANFRED [*alone*]. We are the tools of time and terror:

Days

Steal on us, and steal from us; yet we live,  
Loathing our life, and dreading still to die.  
In all the days of this detested yoke—  
This vital weight upon the struggling heart,  
Which sinks with sorrow, or beats quick with pain,  
Or joy that ends in agony or faintness—  
In all the days of past and future, for  
In life there is no present, we can number  
How few—how less than few—wherein the soul  
Forbears to pant for breath, and yet draws back  
As from a stream in winter, though the chill  
Be but a moment's. I have one resource  
Still in my science—I can call the dead,  
And ask them what it is we dread to be;  
The sternest answer can but be the Grave,  
And that is nothing. If they answer not—  
The buried Prophet answered to the Hag  
Of Endor; and the Spartan Monarch drew  
From the Byzantine maid's unsleeping spirit  
An answer and his destiny—he slew  
That which he loved, unknowing what he slew,  
And died unpardon'd—though he call'd in aid  
The Phyxian Jove, and in Phigalia roused  
The Arcadian Evocators to compel  
The indignant shadow to depose her wrath,  
Or fix her term of vengeance—she replied  
In words of dubious import, but fulfill'd.  
If I had never lived, that which I love  
Had still been living; had I never loved,  
That which I love would still be beautiful,  
Happy and giving happiness. What is she?

What is she now?—a sufferer for my sins—  
A thing I dare not think upon—or nothing.  
Within few hours I shall not call in vain—  
Yet in this hour I dread the thing I dare:  
Until this hour I never shrunk to gaze  
On spirit, good or evil—now I tremble,  
And feel a strange cold thaw upon my heart.  
But I can act even what I most abhor,  
And champion human fears.—The night approaches.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—*The Summit of the Jungfrau Mountain.*

[*Enter FIRST DESTINY.*]

The moon is rising broad, and round, and bright;  
And here on snows, where never human foot  
Of common mortal trod, we nightly tread,  
And leave no traces: o'er the savage sea,  
The glassy ocean of the mountain ice,  
We skim its rugged breakers, which put on  
The aspect of a tumbling tempest's foam,  
Frozen in a moment—a dead whirlpool's image:  
And this most steep fantastic pinnacle,  
The fretwork of some earthquake—where the clouds  
Pause to repose themselves in passing by—  
Is sacred to our revels, or our vigils;  
Here do I wait my sisters, on our way  
To the Hall of Arimanes, for to-night  
Is our great festival—'tis strange they come not.

[*A Voice without, singing.*]

The Captive Usurper,  
Hurl'd down from the throne,  
Lay buried in torpor,  
Forgotten and lone;

I broke through his slumbers,  
I shiver'd his chain,  
I leagued him with numbers—  
He's Tyrant again!  
With the blood of a million he'll answer my care,  
With a nation's destruction—his flight and despair.

[*Second Voice, without.*]

The ship sail'd on, the ship sail'd fast,  
But I left not a sail, and I left not a mast;  
There is not a plank of the hull or the deck,  
And there is not a wretch to lament o'er his wreck;  
Save one, whom I held, as he swam, by the hair,  
And he was a subject well worthy my care;  
A traitor on land, and a pirate at sea,—  
But I saved him to wreak further havoc for me!

[*FIRST DESTINY, answering.*]

The city lies sleeping;  
The morn, to deplore it,  
May dawn on it weeping:  
Sullenly, slowly,  
The black plague flew o'er it—  
Thousands lie lowly;  
Tens of thousands shall perish;  
The living shall fly from  
The sick they should cherish;  
But nothing can vanquish  
The touch that they die from.  
Sorrow and anguish,  
And evil and dread,  
Envelop a nation;  
The blest are the dead,  
Who see not the sight

Of their own desolation;  
This work of a night—  
This wreck of a realm—this deed of my doing—  
For ages I've done, and shall still be renewing!

[*Enter the SECOND and THIRD DESTINIES.*]

[*The Three.*]

Our hands contain the hearts of men,  
Our footsteps are their graves;  
We only give to take again  
The spirits of our slaves!

FIRST DESTINY. Welcome!—Where's Nemesis?

SECOND DESTINY. At some great work;  
But what I know not, for my hands were full.

THIRD DESTINY. Behold she cometh.

[*Enter NEMESIS.*]

FIRST DESTINY. Say, where hast thou been?  
My sisters and thyself are slow to-night.

NEMESIS. I was detain'd repairing shatter'd thrones,  
Marrying fools, restoring dynasties,  
Avenging men upon their enemies,  
And making them repent their own revenge;  
Goading the wise to madness; from the dull  
Shaping out oracles to rule the world  
Afresh, for they were waxing out of date,  
And mortals dared to ponder for themselves,  
To weigh kings in the balance, and to speak  
Of freedom, the forbidden fruit.—Away!  
We have outstay'd the hour—mount we our clouds!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*The Hall of Arimanes—Arimanes on his Throne, a Globe of Fire, surrounded by the Spirits.*

[*Hymn of the SPIRITS.*]

Hail to our Master!—Prince of Earth and Air!  
 Who walks the clouds and waters—in his hand  
 The sceptre of the elements, which tear  
 Themselves to chaos at his high command!  
 He breatheth—and a tempest shakes the sea;  
 He speaketh—and the clouds reply in thunder;  
 He gazeth—from his glance the sunbeams flee;  
 He moveth—earthquakes rend the world asunder.  
 Beneath his footsteps the volcanoes rise;  
 His shadow in the Pestilence; his path  
 The comets herald through the crackling skies;  
 And planets turn to ashes at his wrath.  
 To him War offers daily sacrifice;  
 To him Death pays his tribute; Life is his,  
 With all its infinite of agonies—  
 And his the spirit of whatever is!

[*Enter the DESTINIES and NEMESIS.*]

FIRST DESTINY. Glory to Arimanes! on the earth  
 His power increaseth—both my sisters did  
 His bidding, nor did I neglect my duty!

SECOND DESTINY. Glory to Arimanes! we who bow  
 The necks of men, bow down before his throne!

THIRD DESTINY. Glory to Arimanes! we await His nod!

NEMESIS. Sovereign of Sovereigns! we are thine,  
 And all that liveth, more or less, is ours,  
 And most things wholly so; still to increase  
 Our power, increasing thine, demands our care,  
 And we are vigilant. Thy late commands  
 Have been fulfil'd to the utmost.

[Enter MANFRED.]

A SPIRIT.    What is here?

A mortal!—Thou most rash and fatal wretch,  
Bow down and worship!

SECOND SPIRIT. I do know the man—

A Magian of great power, and fearful skill!

THIRD SPIRIT. Bow down and worship, slave!—

What, know'st thou not

Thine and our Sovereign?—Tremble, and obey!

ALL THE SPIRITS. Prostrate thyself, and thy condemned  
clay,

Child of the Earth! or dread the worst.

MANFRED.

I know it;

And yet ye see I kneel not.

FOURTH SPIRIT. 'T will be taught thee.

MANFRED. 'T is taught already;—many a night on the earth.

On the bare ground, have I bow'd down my face,

And strew'd my head with ashes; I have known

The fulness of humiliation, for

I sunk before my vain despair, and knelt

To my own desolation.

FIFTH SPIRIT.           Dost thou dare

Refuse to Arimanes on his throne

What the whole earth accords, beholding not

The terror of his glory?—Crouch, I say.

MANFRED. Bid *him* bow down to that which is above  
him,

## The overruling Infinite—the Maker

Who made him not for worship—let him kneel,

And we will kneel together.

THE SPIRITS. Crush the worm!

Tear him in pieces!—

FIRST DESTINY. Hence! avaunt!—he's mine.

Prince of the Powers invisible! This man



Is of no common order, as his port  
 And presence here denote; his sufferings  
 Have been of an immortal nature, like  
 Our own; his knowledge, and his powers and will,  
 As far as is compatible with clay,  
 Which clogs the ethereal essence, have been such  
 As clay hath seldom borne; his aspirations  
 Have been beyond the dwellers of the earth,  
 And they have only taught him what we know—  
 That knowledge is not happiness, and science  
 But an exchange of ignorance for that  
 Which is another kind of ignorance.  
 This is not all—the passions, attributes  
 Of earth and heaven, from which no power, nor being,  
 Nor breath from the worm upwards is exempt,  
 Have pierced his heart, and in their consequence  
 Made him a thing which I, who pity not,  
 Yet pardon those who pity. He is mine,  
 And thine, it may be; be it so, or not,  
 No other Spirit in this region hath  
 A soul like his—or power upon his soul.

NEMESIS. What doth he here then?

FIRST DESTINY.

Let him answer that.

MANFRED. Ye know what I have known; and without  
 power

I could not be amongst ye: but there are  
 Powers deeper still beyond—I come in quest  
 Of such, to answer unto what I seek.

NEMESIS. What wouldst thou?

MANFRED.

Thou canst not reply to me.

Call up the dead—my question is for them.

NEMESIS. Great Arimanes, doth thy will avouch  
 The wishes of this mortal?

ARIMANES.

Yea.

NEMESIS.

Whom wouldst thou

Uncharnel?

MANFRED. One without a tomb—call up Astarte.

## NEMESIS.

Shadow! or Spirit!  
 Whatever thou art,  
 Which still doth inherit  
 The whole or a part  
 Of the form of thy birth,  
 Of the mould of thy clay,  
 Which return'd to the earth,  
 Re-appear to the day!  
 Bear what thou borest,  
 The heart and the form,  
 And the aspect thou worst  
 Redeem from the worm.

Appear!—Appear!—Appear!  
 Who send thee there requires thee here!

*[The Phantom of ASTARTE rises  
 and stands in the midst.]*

MANFRED. Can this be death? there's bloom upon her  
 cheek;  
 But now I see it is no living hue,  
 But a strange hectic—like the unnatural red  
 Which Autumn plants upon the perish'd leaf.  
 It is the same! Oh, God that I should dread  
 To look upon the same—Astarte!—No.  
 I cannot speak to her—but bid her speak—  
 Forgive me or condemn me.

## NEMESIS.

By the power which hath broken  
 The grave which enthrall'd thee,  
 Speak to him who hath spoken,  
 Or those who have call'd thee!

MANFRED.

She is silent,  
And in that silence I am more than answer'd.

NEMESIS. My power extends no further, Prince of Air!  
It rests with thee alone—command her voice.

ARIMANES. Spirit—obey this sceptre!

NEMESIS.

Silent still!

She is not of our order, but belongs  
To the other powers. Mortal! thy quest is vain,  
And we are baffled also.

MANFRED.

Hear me, hear me—

Astarte! my beloved! speak to me:

I have so much endured—so much endure—  
Look on me! the grave hath not changed thee more  
Than I am changed for thee. Thou lovedst me  
Too much, as I loved thee: we were not made  
To torture thus each other, though it were  
The deadliest sin to love as we have loved.  
Say that thou loath'st me not—that I do bear  
This punishment for both—that thou wilt be  
One of the blessed—and that I shall die;  
For hitherto all hateful things conspire  
To bind me in existence—in a life  
Which makes me shrink from immortality—  
A future like the past. I cannot rest.  
I know not what I ask, nor what I seek;  
I feel but what thou art, and what I am;  
And I would hear yet once before I perish  
The voice which was my music—Speak to me!  
For I have call'd on thee in the still night,  
Startled the slumbering birds from the hush'd boughs,  
And woke the mountain wolves, and made the caves  
Acquainted with thy vainly echoed name,  
Which answer'd me—many things answer'd me—  
Spirits and men—but thou wert silent all.  
Yet speak to me! I have outwatch'd the stars,  
And gazed o'er heaven in vain search of thee.  
Speak to me! I have wander'd o'er the earth,

And never found thy likeness—Speak to me!  
Look on the fiends around—they feel for me:  
I fear them not, and feel for thee alone—  
Speak to me! though it be in wrath;—but say—  
I reckon not what—but let me hear thee once—  
This once—once more!

PHANTOM OF ASTARTE. Manfred.

MANFRED. Say on, say on—  
I live but in the sound—it is thy voice!

PHANTOM. Manfred! To-morrow ends thine earthly ills.  
Farewell!

MANFRED. Yet one word more—am I forgiven?

PHANTOM. Farewell!

MANFRED. Say, shall we meet again?

PHANTOM. Farewell!

MANFRED. One word for mercy! Say, thou lovest me.

PHANTOM. Manfred!

[*The Spirit of ASTARTE disappears.*]

NEMESIS. She's gone, and will not be recall'd;  
Her words will be fulfill'd. Return to the earth.

A SPIRIT. He is convulsed.—This is to be a mortal  
And seek the things beyond mortality.

ANOTHER SPIRIT. Yet, see, he mastereth himself, and makes  
His torture tributary to his will.  
Had he been one of us, he would have made  
An awful spirit.

NEMESIS. Hast thou further question  
Of our great sovereign, or his worshippers?

MANFRED. None.

NEMESIS. Then for a time farewell.

MANFRED. We meet then! where? On the earth?—  
Even as thou wilt: and for the grace accorded  
I now depart a debtor. Fare ye well! [*Exit MANFRED.*]

[*Scene closes.*]

## ACT III

SCENE I.—*A Hall in the Castle of Manfred.*

[MANFRED and HERMAN.]

MANFRED. What is the hour?

HERMAN. It wants but one till sunset,  
And promises a lovely twilight.

MANFRED. Say,  
Are all things so disposed of in the tower  
As I directed?

HERMAN. All, my lord, are ready:  
Here is the key and casket.

MANFRED. It is well:  
Thou may'st retire. [Exit HERMAN.]

MANFRED [*alone*]. There is a calm upon me—  
Inexplicable stillness! which till now  
Did not belong to what I knew of life.  
If that I did not know philosophy  
To be of all our vanities the motliest,  
The merest word that ever fool'd the ear  
From out the schoolman's jargon, I should deem  
The golden secret, the sought "Kalon," found  
And seated in my soul. It will not last,  
But it is well to have known it, though but once:  
It hath enlarged my thoughts with a new sense,  
And I within my tablets would note down  
That there is such a feeling. Who is there?

[*Re-enter HERMAN.*]

HERMAN. My lord, the abbot of St. Maurice craves  
To greet your presence.

[*Enter the ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE.*]

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. Peace be with Count Manfred!

MANFRED. Thanks, holy father! welcome to these walls;  
Thy presence honors them, and blesseth those  
Who dwell within them.

ABBOTT OF ST. MAURICE. Would it were so, Count!—  
But I would fain confer with thee alone.

MANFRED. Herman, retire.—What would my reverend  
guest?

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. Thus, without prelude:—Age and  
zeal, my office,  
And good intent, must plead my privilege;  
Our near, though not acquainted neighborhood,  
May also be my herald. Rumors strange,  
And of unholy nature, are abroad,  
And busy with thy name; a noble name  
For centuries: may he who bears it now  
Transmit it unimpair'd!

MANFRED. Proceed,—I listen.

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. 'Tis said thou holdest converse with  
the things  
Which are forbidden to the search of man;  
That with the dwellers of the dark abodes,  
The many evil and unheavenly spirits  
Which walk the valley of the shade of death,  
Thou communest. I know that with mankind,  
Thy fellows in creation, thou dost rarely  
Exchange thy thoughts, and that thy solitude  
Is as an anchorite's, were it but holy.

MANFRED. And what are they who do avouch these things?

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. My pious brethren—the sacred  
peasantry—

Even thy own vassals—who do look on thee  
With most unquiet eyes. Thy life's in peril.

MANFRED. Take it.

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. I come to save, and not destroy:  
I would not pry into thy secret soul;  
But if these things be sooth, there still is time  
For penitence and pity: reconcile thee  
With the true church, and through the church to heaven.

MANFRED. I hear thee. This is my reply: whate'er  
I may have been, or am, doth rest between  
Heaven and myself. I shall not choose a mortal  
To be my mediator. Have I sinn'd  
Against your ordinances? prove and punish!

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. My son! I did not speak of punishment,  
But penitence and pardon;—with myself  
The choice of such remains—and for the last,  
Our institutions and our strong belief  
Have given me power to smooth the path from sin  
To higher hope and better thoughts; the first  
I leave to heaven,—“Vengeance is mine alone!”  
So saith the Lord, and with all humbleness  
His servant echoes back the awful word,

MANFRED. Old man! there is no power in holy men,  
Nor charm in prayer, nor purifying form  
Of penitence, nor outward look, nor fast,  
Nor agony—nor, greater than all these,  
The innate tortures of that deep despair,  
Which is remorse without the fear of hell,  
But all in all sufficient to itself  
Would make a hell of heaven—can exorcise  
From out the unbound spirit the quick sense  
Of its own sins, wrongs, sufferance, and revenge  
Upon itself; there is no future pang  
Can deal that justice on the self-condemn'd  
He deals on his own soul.

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. All this is well;  
For this will pass away, and be succeeded  
By an auspicious hope, which shall look up  
With calm assurance to that blessed place,



Which all who seek may win, whatever be  
Their earthly errors, so they be atoned:  
And the commencement of atonement is  
The sense of its necessity. Say on—  
And all our church can teach thee shall be taught;  
And all we can absolve thee shall be pardon'd.

MANFRED. When Rome's sixth emperor was near his last,  
The victim of a self-inflicted wound,  
To shun the torments of a public death  
From senates once his slaves, a certain soldier,  
With show of loyal pity, would have stanch'd  
The gushing throat with his officious robe;  
The dying Roman thrust him back, and said—  
Some empire still in his expiring glance—  
"It is too late—is this fidelity?"

ABBOTT OF ST. MAURICE. And what of this?

MANFRED. I answer with the Roman—"It is too late!"

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. It never can be so.

To reconcile thyself with thy own soul  
And thy soul with heaven. Hast thou no hope?  
'Tis strange—even those who do despair above,  
Yet shape themselves some fantasy on earth,  
To which frail twig they cling, like drowning men.

MANFRED. Ay—father! I have had those earthly visions,  
And noble aspirations in my youth,  
To make my own the mind of other men,  
The enlightener of nations; and to rise  
I knew not whither—it might be to fall;  
But fall, even as the mountain-cataract,  
Which having leapt from its more dazzling height,  
Even in the foaming strength of its abyss,  
(Which casts up misty columns that become  
Clouds raining from the re-ascended skies),  
Lies low but mighty still.—But this is past,  
My thoughts mistook themselves.

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. And wherefore so?

MANFRED. I could not tame my nature down; for he

Must serve who fain would sway; and soothe, and sue,  
And watch all time, and pry into all place,  
And be a living lie, who would become  
A mighty thing amongst the mean, and such  
The mass are; I disdain'd to mingle with  
A herd, though to be leader—and of wolves.  
The lion is alone, and so am I.

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. And why not live and act with  
other men?

MANFRED. Because my nature was averse from life;  
And yet not cruel; for I would not make,  
But find a desolation. Like the wind,  
The red-hot breath of the most lone simoom,  
Which dwells but in the desert, and sweeps o'er  
The barren sands which bear no shrubs to blast,  
And revels o'er their wild and arid waves,  
And seeketh not, so that it is not sought,  
But being met is deadly,—such hath been  
The course of my existence; but there came  
Things in my path which are no more.

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE.

Alas!

I 'gin to fear that thou art past all aid  
From me and from my calling; yet so young,  
I still would—

MANFRED. Look on me! there is an order  
Of mortals on the earth, who do become  
Old in their youth, and die ere middle age,  
Without the violence of warlike death;  
Some perishing of pleasure, some of study,  
Some worn with toil, some of mere weariness,  
Some of disease, and some insanity,  
And some of wither'd or of broken hearts;  
For this last is a malady which slays  
More than are number'd in the lists of Fate,  
Taking all shapes, and bearing many names.  
Look upon me! for even of all these things  
Have I partaken; and of all these things,

One were enough; then wonder not that I  
Am what I am, but that I ever was,  
Or having been, that I am still on earth.

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. Yet, hear me still——

MANFRED. Old man! I do respect  
Thine order, and revere thine years; I deem  
Thy purpose pious, but it is in vain:  
Think me not churlish; I would spare thyself,  
Far more than me, in shunning at this time  
All further colloquy—and so—farewell. *[Exit MANFRED.]*

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. This should have been a noble  
creature; he  
Hath all the energy which would have made  
A goodly frame of glorious elements,  
Had they been wisely mingled; as it is,  
It is an awful chaos—light and darkness,  
And mind and dust, and passions and pure thoughts  
Mix'd, and contending without end or order,—  
All dormant or destructive: he will perish,  
And yet he must not; I will try once more  
For such are worth redemption; and my duty  
Is to dare all things for a righteous end.  
I'll follow him—but cautiously, though surely.  
*[Exit ABBOT.]*

SCENE II.—*Another Chamber.*

*[MANFRED and HERMAN.]*

HERMAN. My lord, you bade me wait on you at sunset:  
He sinks behind the mountain.

MANFRED. Doth he so?  
I will look on him. *[MANFRED advances to the Window of  
the Hall.]*

Glorious Orb! the idol  
Of early nature, and the vigorous race  
Of undiseased mankind, the giant sons

Of the embrace of angels, with a sex  
 More beautiful than they, which did draw down  
 The erring spirits who can ne'er return—  
 Most glorious orb! that wert a worship, ere  
 The mystery of thy making was reveal'd!  
 Thou earliest minister of the Almighty,  
 Which gladden'd, on their mountain tops, the hearts  
 Of the Chaldean shepherds, till they pour'd  
 Themselves in orisons! Thou material God!  
 And representative of the unknown—  
 Who chose thee for his shadow! Thou chief star!  
 Centre of many stars! which mak'st our earth  
 Endurable, and temperest the hues  
 And hearts of all who walk within thy rays!  
 Sire of the seasons! Monarch of the climes,  
 And those who dwell in them! for near or far,  
 Our inborn spirits have a tint of thee  
 Even as our outward aspects;—thou dost rise,  
 And shine, and set in glory. Fare thee well!  
 I ne'er shall see thee more. As my first glance  
 Of love and wonder was for thee, then take  
 My latest look: thou wilt not beam on one  
 To whom the gifts of life and warmth have been  
 Of a more fatal nature. He is gone:  
 I follow.

[Exit MANFRED.]

SCENE III.—*The Mountains—The Castle of Manfred at  
 some distance—A Terrace before a Tower—  
 Time, Twilight.*

[HERMAN, MANUEL and other Dependants of MANFRED.]

HERMAN. 'Tis strange enough; night after night, for years,  
 He hath pursued long vigils in this tower,  
 Without a witness. I have been within it,—  
 So have we all been oft-times; but from it,

Or its contents, it were impossible  
To draw conclusions absolute, of aught  
His studies tend to. To be sure, there is  
One chamber where none enter: I would give  
The fee of what I have to come these three years,  
To pore upon its mysteries.

MANUEL. 'Twere dangerous;  
Content thyself with what thou know'st already.

HERMAN. Ah! Manuel! thou art elderly and wise,  
And couldst say much; thou hast dwelt within the castle—  
How many years is't?

MANUEL. Ere Count Manfred's birth,  
I served his father, whom he nought resembles.

HERMAN. There be more sons in like predicament.  
But wherein do they differ?

MANUEL. I speak not  
Of features or of form, but mind and habits;  
Count Sigismund was proud, but gay and free,—  
A warrior and a reveller; he dwelt not  
With books and solitude, nor made the night  
A gloomy vigil, but a festal time,  
Merrier than day; he did not walk the rocks  
And forests like a wolf, nor turn aside  
From men and their delights.

HERMAN. Beshrew the hour,  
But those were jocund times! I would that such  
Would visit the old walls again; they look  
As if they had forgotten them.

MANUEL. These walls  
Must change their chieftain first. Oh! I have seen  
Some strange things in them, Herman.

HERMAN. Come, be friendly;  
Relate me some to while away our watch:  
I've heard thee darkly speak of an event  
Which happen'd hereabouts, by this same tower.

MANUEL. That was a night indeed! I do remember  
'Twas twilight, as it may be now, and such

Another evening;—yon red cloud, which rests  
 On Eigher's pinnacle, so rested then,—  
 So like that it might be the same; the wind  
 Was faint and gusty, and the mountain snows  
 Began to glitter with the climbing moon;  
 Count Manfred was, as now, within his tower,—  
 How occupied, we knew not, but with him  
 The sole companion of his wanderings  
 And watchings—her, whom of all earthly things  
 That lived, the only thing he seem'd to love,—  
 As he, indeed, by blood was bound to do  
 The lady Astarte, his—

Hush! who comes here?

[*Enter the ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE*]

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. Where is your master?

HERMAN. Yonder in the tower.

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. I must speak with him.

MANUEL. 'Tis impossible;

He is most private, and must not be thus  
 Intruded on.

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. Upon myself I take  
 The forfeit of my fault, if fault there be—  
 But I must see him.

HERMAN. Thou hast seen him once  
 This eve already.

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. Herman! I command thee,  
 Knock, and apprise the Count of my approach.

HERMAN. We dare not.

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. Then it seems I must be herald  
 Of my own purpose.

MANUEL. Reverend father, stop—  
 I pray you pause.

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE.

Why so?

MANUEL. But step this way,  
 And I will tell you further.

[*Exeunt.*]



SCENE IV.—*Interior of the Tower.*[MANFRED *alone.*]

The stars are forth, the moon above the tops  
Of the snow-shining mountains.—Beautiful!  
I linger yet with Nature, for the Night  
Hath been to me a more familiar face  
Than that of man; and in her starry shade  
Of dim and solitary loveliness,  
I learn'd the language of another world.  
I do remember me, that in my youth,  
When I was wandering,—upon such a night  
I stood within the Coliseum's wall,  
'Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome;  
The trees which grew along the broken arches  
Waved dark in the blue midnight, and the stars  
Shone through the rents of ruin; from afar  
The watch-dog bay'd beyond the Tiber: and  
More near from out the Cæsar's palace came  
The owl's long cry, and, interruptedly,  
Of distant sentinels the fitful song  
Begun and died upon the gentle wind.  
Some cypresses beyond the time-worn breach  
Appear'd to skirt the horizon, yet they stood  
Within a bowshot. Where the Cæsars dwelt,  
And dwell the tuneless birds of night, amidst  
A grove which springs through levell'd battlements,  
And twines its roots with the imperial hearths,  
Ivy usurps the laurel's place of growth;  
But the gladiators' bloody Circus stands,  
A noble wreck in ruinous perfection,  
While Cæsar's chambers, and the Augustan halls,  
Grovel on earth in indistinct decay.  
And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon, upon  
All this, and cast a wide and tender light,



Which soften'd down the hoar austerity  
 Of rugged desolation, and fill'd up,  
 As 'twere anew, the gaps of centuries;  
 Leaving that beautiful which still was so,  
 And making that which was not, till the place  
 Became religion, and the heart ran o'er  
 With silent worship of the great of old,—  
 The dead but sceptred sovereigns, who still rule  
 Our spirits from their urns.

'Twas such a night!

'Tis strange that I recall it at this time;  
 But I have found our thoughts take wildest flight  
 Even at the moment when they should array  
 Themselves in pensive order.

[*Enter the ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE.*]

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE.      My good lord!  
 I crave a second grace for this approach;  
 But yet let not my humble zeal offend  
 By its abruptness—all it hath of ill  
 Recoils on me; its good in the effect  
 May light upon your head—could I say *heart*—  
 Could I touch *that*, with words or prayers, I should  
 Recall a noble spirit which hath wander'd;  
 But is not yet all lost.

MANFRED.      Thou know'st me not;  
 My days are number'd, and my deeds recorded:  
 Retire, or 'twill be dangerous—Away!

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. Thou dost not mean to menace me?

MANFRED.      Not I;  
 I simply tell thee peril is at hand,  
 And would preserve thee.

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. What dost thou mean?

MANFRED.      Look there!  
 What dost thou see?

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. Nothing.

MANFRED. Look there I say.  
And steadfastly;—now tell me what thou seest?

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. That which should shake me, but I  
fear it not:

I see a dusk and awful figure rise,  
Like an infernal god, from out the earth;  
His face wrapt in a mantle, and his form  
Robed as with angry clouds: he stands between  
Thyself and me—but I do fear him not.

MANFRED. Thou hast no cause—he shall not harm thee—but  
His sight may shock thine old limbs into palsy.  
I say to thee—Retire!

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. And I reply—  
Never—till I have battled with this fiend:—  
What doth he here?

MANFRED. Why—ay—what doth he here?  
I did not send for him,—he is unbidden.

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. Alas! lost mortal! what with guests  
like these  
Hast thou to do? I tremble for thy sake:  
Why doth he gaze on thee, and thou on him?  
Ah! he unveils his aspect: on his brow  
The thunder-scars are graven: from his eye  
Glares forth the immortality of hell—  
Avaunt!—

MANFRED. Pronounce—what is thy mission?

SPIRIT. Come!—

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. What art thou, unknown being?  
answer!—speak!

SPIRIT. The genius of this mortal.—Come! 'tis time.

MANUEL. I am prepared for all things, but deny  
The power which summons me. Who sent thee here?

SPIRIT. Thou'lt know anon—Come! Come!

MANFRED. I have commanded  
Things of an essence greater far than thine,  
And striven with thy masters. Get thee hence!

SPIRIT. Mortal! thine hour is come—Away! I say.

MANFRED. I knew, and know my hour is come, but not  
To render up my soul to such as thee:  
Away! I'll die as I have lived—alone.

SPIRIT. Then I must summon up my brethren.—Rise!

[*Other Spirits rise up.*]

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. Avaunt! ye evil ones!—Avaunt! I  
say;

Ye have no power where piety hath power,  
And I do charge ye in the name——

SPIRIT.

Old man!

We know ourselves, our mission, and thine order;  
Waste not thy holy words on idle uses,  
It were in vain: this man is forfeited.  
Once more I summon him—Away! Away!

MANFRED. I do defy ye,—though I feel my soul  
Is ebbing from me, yet I do defy ye;  
Nor will I hence, while I have earthly breath  
To breathe my scorn upon ye—earthly strength  
To wrestle, though with spirits; what ye take  
Shall be ta'en limb by limb.

SPIRIT.

Reluctant mortal!

Is this the Magian who would so pervade  
The world invisible, and make himself  
Almost our equal? Can it be that thou  
Art thus in love with life? the very life  
Which made thee wretched!

MANFRED.

Thou false fiend, thou liest!

My life is in its last hour,—*that* I know,  
Nor would redeem a moment of that hour;  
I do not combat against death, but thee  
And thy surrounding angels; my past power,  
Was purchased by no compact with thy crew,  
But by superior science—penance, daring,  
And length of watching, strength of mind, and skill  
In knowledge of our fathers—when the earth

SPIRIT. But thy many crimes  
Have made thee——

[*The Demons disappear.*]

MANFRED. 'Tis over—my dull eyes can fix thee not;  
But all things swim around me, and the earth  
Heaves as it were beneath me. Fare thee well!

Give me thy hand.

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. Cold—cold—even to the heart—  
But yet one prayer—Alas! how fares it with thee?

MANFRED. Old man! 'tis not so difficult to die.

[MANFRED *expires*.]

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE. He's gone—his soul hath ta'en its  
earthless flight;

Whither? I dread to think—but he is gone.

## PROMETHEUS

TITAN! to whose immortal eyes  
The sufferings of mortality,  
Seen in their sad reality,  
Were not as things that gods despise;  
What was thy pity's recompense?  
A silent suffering, and intense;  
The rock, the vulture, and the chain,  
All that the proud can feel of pain,  
The agony they do not show,  
The suffocating sense of woe,  
Which speaks but in its loneliness,  
And then is jealous lest the sky  
Should have a listener, nor will sigh  
Until its voice is echoless.

Titan! to thee the strife was given  
Between the suffering and the will,  
Which torture where they cannot kill;  
And the inexorable Heaven,  
And the deaf tyranny of Fate,  
The ruling principle of Hate,  
Which for its pleasure doth create  
The things it may annihilate,  
Refused thee even the boon to die;  
The wretched gift eternity  
Was thine—and thou hast borne it well.

All that the Thunderer wrung from thee  
Was but the menace which flung back  
On him the torments of thy rack;  
The fate thou didst so well foresee,

But would not to appease him tell;  
And in thy Silence was his Sentence,  
And in his Soul a vain repentance,  
And evil dread so ill dissembled,  
That in his hand the lightnings trembled.

Thy Godlike crime was to be kind,  
To render with thy precepts less  
The sum of human wretchedness,  
And strengthen Man with his own mind;  
But baffled as thou wert from high,  
Still in thy patient energy,  
In the endurance, and repulse  
Of thine impenetrable Spirit,  
Which Earth and Heaven could not convulse,  
A mighty lesson we inherit:  
Thou art a symbol and a sign  
To Mortals of their fate and force;  
Like thee, Man is in part divine,  
A troubled stream from a pure source;  
And Man in portions can foresee  
His own funereal destiny;  
His wretchedness, and his resistance,  
And his sad unallied existence:  
To which his Spirit may oppose  
Itself—and equal to all woes,  
And a firm will, and a deep sense,  
Which even in torture can descry  
Its own concentr'd recompense,  
Triumphant where it dare defy,  
And making Death a Victory.



PROMETHEUS UNBOUND

BY

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

(1820)



## INTRODUCTION

Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* will be found the most difficult of the philosophical dramas to follow or to comprehend. Shelley's poetic genius was not dramatic, but lyrical; *Prometheus Unbound*, though cast in dramatic form, is a lyric phantasmagoria through which may be dimly discerned the march of events as well as the poet's philosophy. Herein are scattered short lyrics of unsurpassed music and beauty, for example that of the Fourth Spirit (p. 376), or Prometheus (p. 399), and of Asia (p. 400). These may serve as a test of a reader's capacity to enjoy lyric poetry. Shelley's long passages frequently escape the bounds of thought-content, or of logical sequence, and in a rush of emotional intensity reach a height where they become, in his own characteristic phrase, "Pinnacled dim in the intense inane." When the reader finds himself faced with one of these flights, he should let all rational inquiries fall behind, enter Shelley's magic chariot, and sweep through his empyrean of color, light, and sound, dazzled by the fleeting imagery and charmed by the lyrical music of the spheres. Few poets possess such a gift for beautifying the abstract and for idealizing the real, and no other modern poet has been endowed with such myth-making power. In life as in poetry, Shelley was always trying to pierce with his imagination beyond "the painted veil," which he called the world, to the ideal world of universal Truth, Love, and Beauty, which for him was the real world and which he felt lay just beyond. This life of raw experience he describes as: "A dome of many colored glass" which "stains the white radiance of eternity."

In his pursuit of the ideal Shelley naturally found this world in contrast full of disappointments, and full of sordid, selfish conflicts; and in his lyrics of despair, when he wished "to lie down like a tired child and weep away a life of care," and to call upon Nature to wait with him for the world's

wrong, he might have agreed with the trenchant summing up of life uttered in similar mood by his fellow poet Keats:

“Here where men sit and hear each other groan;  
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,  
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin and dies,  
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow  
And leaden-eyed despairs,  
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,  
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.”

Shelley was not only an idealistic dreamer, however, he was a passionate reformer, who had a millennial desire to change the world of evil into perfect beauty and truth within the twinkling of an eye. This transformation could be achieved if men were purged of their blindness and ignorance. Sin and evil, Shelley believed, were solely the results of imperfect knowledge. Give men the light and there will be ushered in the millennium of social harmony and happiness. Most of the evils in existence seemed to Shelley to come from the tyrannies of church and state, the dogmas, creeds, and customs of established society. What men needed was freedom from the chains of these great oppressors. In Shelley appear all the familiar doctrines of the French Revolutionary philosophers as he found them chiefly in the book entitled *Political Justice*, written by his father-in-law, William Godwin.

When he came to write his version of *Prometheus Unbound*, he had in mind the trilogy of Aeschylus, of which only the *Prometheus Bound*, as we have seen, is preserved. In accord with Shelley's philosophical theories, Jupiter is portrayed as the great tyrant, whose reign is responsible for all the evils and sufferings endured by mankind. Prometheus is the savior of men, the proud and unflinching rebel who, by daring to steal the fire of knowledge from Jupiter and give it to men, deprived Jupiter of the power of keeping them in a night of ignorance. Knowledge alone, however, is insufficient to overthrow Jupiter; there must also be Love, as typified by Asia, the beloved of Prometheus. The great enemy Jupiter, representing hate, can be conquered only by the union of the greater forces, Love and Wisdom.

Act I. Up to the time of the opening of the drama, Prometheus, chained to the rock, has endured his sufferings in defiance and hate, but always with the knowledge that a day is coming (p. 352), unknown to Jupiter, when the tyrant will be cast down, and the world renew itself in freedom, brotherhood, truth, and beauty. Prometheus asks to hear the curse he once pronounced upon Jupiter. The four Voices of Nature, and Mother Nature herself, recall the terror with which they heard the curse; and Ione, and Panthea who personify Hope and Faith, dread to see the Phantasm of Jupiter, which is compelled to rise at Prometheus' command and repeat the curse (p. 360), "Fiend I defy thee! with a calm, fixed mind, etc." Compare this curse with that of Job (p. 16) and Andrieev (p. 503). After hearing the curse, Prometheus repents of having uttered it, whereupon Earth, thinking that Prometheus has given in, cries out in agony. Mercury now appears with the Furies to force Prometheus to yield by afflicting him with new tortures, not physical ones, which he has already endured, but the mental sufferings of disappointment, mistrust, etc. They point out that Prometheus' gift of knowledge created in man "a thirst of fierce fever, hope, love, doubt, desire which consume him forever". ("He that increaseth knowledge", wrote the writer of Ecclesiastes, "increaseth sorrow".) As examples of the disasters and divisions which reformers bring are the bitter strifes of Christian sects, and the holocaust of the French Revolution which ended in the reëstablishment of tyranny under Napoleon (p. 371). The greatest torture the Furies can inflict upon Prometheus is to suggest that his theft of knowledge for mankind has but multiplied trouble upon earth. The Fury vividly sums up this wretchedness (p. 372), but Prometheus, though suffering excruciating torture, again expresses pity for his enemy. Instantly the Fury vanishes, and the Spirits return to comfort Prometheus.

Act II. Prometheus' declaration of pity for his enemy causes the release of Asia, from her seclusion in a vale of the Indian Caucasus. She travels with Panthea to the realm of Demogorgon, through a forest abounding with rocks and caverns (Scene II), (where the Second Faun prophesies brotherhood upon earth), to a Pinnacle of Rock (Scene III), and at last to Demogorgon's Cave, (Scene IV). Demogorgon

represents the Absolute, the Ultimate Power that alone can overthrow Jupiter. Asia rehearses the creation of man and his suffering under Jupiter, then hears Prometheus singing "Life of life, thy lips enkindle", and answers with the lyric, "My soul is an enchanted boat".

Act III discloses Jupiter in Heaven terrified by the approach of Demogorgon, who casts him down despite his pleas for mercy; Hercules unbinds Prometheus from the rock (Scene III), and Prometheus and Asia are united; the Spirit of the Hour, in a remarkable passage, forecasts Shelley's vision of an earthly paradise, of mankind made perfect:

"Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, but man  
Equal, unclassed, tribeless, and nationless,  
Exempt from awe, worship, degree, the king  
Over himself; just, gentle, wise, but man  
Passionless?—no, yet free from guilt or pain."

Although the dramatic conflict is over, Shelley adds a Fourth Act made up wholly of lyric celebrations by the Moon, the Earth, Panthea, Ione, and other Voices and Spirits. At the close Demogorgon pronounces again Shelley's creed for the perfectibility of man. This passage may serve as an example of "the grand style" in poetry:

"To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;  
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;  
To defy Power, which seems omnipotent;  
To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates  
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;  
Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;  
This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be  
Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;  
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory."

Shelley's Prometheus conquers his evil enemy by following the dictum of Christ, "Love your enemies". Shelley's solution

is the ideal of peace and brotherhood to be established upon earth.

### References.

A new account of Shelley's amazing life may be found in Walter Edwin Peck's *Shelley, His Life and Work*, (Houghton, Mifflin Co., New York, 1927), 2 vols. A good single volume edition of Shelley's poetry is published in the Cambridge Edition, (Houghton Mifflin Co., New York, 1912). The notes to *Prometheus Unbound*, written by Shelley's wife, Mary Godwin Shelley, and Vida D. Scudder's study of the play (Heath, Boston, 1915), will be found valuable. George W. Woodberry's essay in his volume *The Torch* gives a sympathetic interpretation of Shelley's views.





TEXT OF THE PLAY

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

PROMETHEUS

DEMOGORGON

MERCURY

HERCULES

ASIA

PANTHEA } Oceanides

IONE }

JUPITER

THE EARTH

OCEAN

APOLLO THE PHANTASM OF JUPITER

THE SPIRIT OF THE EARTH

THE SPIRIT OF THE MOON

SPIRITS OF THE HOURS

SPIRITS. ECHOES. FAUNS. FURIES

# PROMETHEUS UNBOUND

A Lyrical Drama in Four Acts.

AUDISNE HAEC AMPHIARAE, SUB TERRAM ABDITE?

## ACT I

SCENE—*A Ravine of Icy Rocks in the Indian Caucasus.*

[PROMETHEUS is discovered bound to the Precipice. PANTHEA and IONE are seated at his feet. TIME, night. During the Scene, morning slowly breaks.]

PROMETHEUS. Monarch of Gods and Demons, and all Spirits  
But One, who throng those bright and rolling worlds  
Which Thou and I alone of living things  
Behold with sleepless eyes! regard this Earth  
Made multitudinous with thy slaves, whom thou  
Requittest for knee-worship, prayer, and praise,  
And toil, and hecatombs of broken hearts,  
With fear and self-contempt and barren hope.  
Whilst me, who am thy foe, eyeless in hate,  
Hast thou made reign and triumph, to thy scorn  
O'er mine own misery and thy vain revenge.  
Three thousand years of sleep-unsheltered hours,  
And moments aye divided by keen pangs  
Till they seemed years, torture and solitude,  
Scorn and despair,—these are mine empire;—  
More glorious far than that which thou surveyest  
From thine unenvied throne, O, Mighty God!  
Almighty, had I deigned to share the shame

Of thine ill tyranny, and hung not here  
Nailed to this wall of eagle-baffling mountain,  
Black, wintry, dead, unmeasured; without herb,  
Insect, or beast, or shape or sound of life.  
Ah me! alas, pain, pain ever, for ever!

No change, no pause, no hope! Yet I endure.  
I ask the Earth, have not the mountains felt?  
I ask yon Heaven, the all-beholding Sun,  
Has it not seen? The Sea, in storm or calm,  
Heaven's ever-changing Shadow, spread below,  
Have its deaf waves not heard my agony?  
Ah me! alas, pain, pain ever, for ever!

The crawling glaciers pierce me with the spears  
Of their moon-freezing crystals, the bright chains  
Eat with their burning cold into my bones,  
Heaven's wingèd hound, polluting from thy lips  
His beak in poison not his own, tears up  
My heart; and shapeless sights come wandering by,  
The ghastly people of the realm of dream,  
Mocking me: and the Earthquake-fiends are charged  
To wrench the rivets from my quivering wounds  
When the rocks split and close again behind:  
While from their loud abysses howling throng  
The genii of the storm, urging the rage  
Of whirlwind, and afflict me with keen hail.  
And yet to me welcome is day and night,  
Whether one breaks the hoar frost of the morn,  
Or starry, dim, and slow, the other climbs  
The leaden-colored east; for then they lead  
The wingless, crawling hours, one among whom  
—As some dark Priest hales the reluctant victim—  
Shall drag thee, cruel King, to kiss the blood  
From these pale feet, which then might trample thee  
If they disdained not such a prostrate slave.  
Disdain! Ah no! I pity thee. What ruin

Will hunt thee undefended thro' the wide Heaven!  
How will thy soul, cloven to its depth with terror,  
Gape like a hell within! I speak in grief,  
Not exultation, for I hate no more,  
As then ere misery made me wise. The curse  
Once breathed on thee I would recall. Ye Mountains,  
Whose many-voicèd Echoes, through the mist  
Of cataracts, flung the thunder of that spell!  
Ye icy Springs, stagnant with wrinkling frost,  
Which vibrated to hear me, and then crept  
Shuddering thro' India! Thou serenest Air,  
Thro' which the Sun walks burning without beams!  
And ye swift Whirlwinds, who on poisèd wings  
Hung mute and moveless o'er yon hushed abyss,  
As thunder, louder than your own, made rock  
The orbèd world! If then my words had power,  
Though I am changed so that aught evil wish  
Is dead within; although no memory be  
Of what is hate, let them not lose it now!  
What was that curse? for ye all heard me speak.

FIRST VOICE [*from the Mountains*]

Thrice three hundred thousand years  
O'er the Earthquake's couch we stood:  
Oft, as men convulsed with fears,  
We trembled in our multitude.

SECOND VOICE [*from the Springs*]

Thunderbolts had parched our water,  
We had been stained with bitter blood,  
And had run mute, 'mid shrieks of slaughter,  
Thro' a city and a solitude.

THIRD VOICE [*from the Air*]

I had clothed, since Earth uprose,  
Its wastes in colors not their own,  
And oft had my serene repose  
Been cloven by many a rending groan.

FOURTH VOICE [*from the Whirlwinds*]

We had soared beneath these mountains  
Unresting ages; nor had thunder,  
Nor yon volcano's flaming fountains,  
Nor any power above or under  
Ever made us mute with wonder.

## FIRST VOICE

But never bowed our snowy crest  
As at the voice of thine unrest.

## SECOND VOICE

Never such a sound before  
To the Indian waves we bore.  
A pilot asleep on the howling sea  
Leaped up from the deck in agony,  
And heard, and cried, "Ah, woe is me!"  
And died as mad as the wild waves be.

## THIRD VOICE

By such dread words from Earth to Heaven  
My still realm was never riven;  
When its wound was closed, there stood  
Darkness o'er the day like blood.



## FOURTH VOICE

And we shrank back; for dreams of ruin  
To frozen caves our flight pursuing  
Made us keep silence—thus—and thus—  
Though silence is a hell to us.

THE EARTH. The tongueless Caverns of the craggy hills  
Cried "Misery!" then; the hollow Heaven replied,  
"Misery!" and the Ocean's purple waves,  
Climbing the land, howled to the lashing winds,  
And the pale nations heard it, "Misery!"

PROMETHEUS. I hear a sound of voices: not the voice  
Which I gave forth. Mother, thy sons and thou  
Scorn him, without whose all-enduring will  
Beneath the fierce omnipotence of Jove,  
Both they and thou had vanished, like thin mist  
Unrolled on the morning wind. Know ye not me,  
The Titan? He who made his agony  
The barrier to your else all-conquering foe?  
Oh, rock-embosomed lawns, and snow-fed streams,  
Now seen athwart frore vapors, deep below,  
Thro' whose o'ershadowing woods I wandered once  
With Asia, drinking life from her loved eyes;  
Why scorns the spirit which informs ye, now  
To commune with me? me alone, who checked,  
As one who checks a fiend-drawn charioteer,  
The falsehood and the force of him who reigns  
Supreme, and with the groans of pining slaves  
Fills your dim glens and liquid wildernesses:  
Why answer ye not, still? Brethren!

THE EARTH.

They dare not.

PROMETHEUS. Who dares? for I would hear that curse  
again.

Ha, what an awful whisper rises up!  
'Tis scarce like sound; it tingles thro' the frame  
As lightning tingles, hovering ere it strike.  
Speak, Spirit! from thine inorganic voice  
I only know that thou art moving near  
And love. How cursed I him?

THE EARTH.                                      How canst thou hear  
Who knowest not the language of the dead?

PROMETHEUS. Thou art a living spirit: speak as they.

THE EARTH. I dare not speak like life, lest Heaven's fell  
King

Should hear, and link me to some wheel of pain  
More torturing than the one whereon I roll.  
Subtle thou art and good, and tho' the Gods  
Hear not this voice, yet thou art more than God  
Being wise and kind: earnestly hearken now.

PROMETHEUS.      Obscurely thro' my brain, like shadows  
                         dim,

Sweep awful thoughts, rapid and thick. I feel  
Faint, like one mingled in entwining love;  
Yet 'tis not pleasure.

THE EARTH. No, thou canst not hear;  
Thou art immortal, and this tongue is known  
Only to those who die.

PROMETHEUS. And what art thou,  
O, melancholy Voice?

THE EARTH. I am the Earth,  
Thy mother; she within whose stony veins,  
To the last fibre of the loftiest tree  
Whose thin leaves trembled in the frozen air,  
Joy ran, as blood within a living frame,  
When thou didst from her bosom, like a cloud,  
Of glory, arise, a spirit of keen joy!  
And at thy voice her pining sons uplifted  
Their prostrate brows from the polluting dust,  
And our almighty Tyrant with fierce dread  
Grew pale, until his thunder chained thee here.

Then, see those million worlds which burn and roll  
Around us: their inhabitants beheld  
My spherèd light wane in wide Heaven; the sea  
Was lifted by strange tempest, and new fire  
From earthquake-rifted mountains of bright snow  
Shook its portentous hair beneath Heaven's frown;  
Lightning and Inundation vexed the plains;  
Blue thistles bloomed in cities; foodless toads  
Within voluptuous chambers panting crawled:  
When Plague had fallen on man, and beast and worm,  
And Famine; and black blight on herb and tree;  
And in the corn, and vines, and meadow-grass,  
Teemed ineradicable poisonous weeds  
Draining their growth, for my wan breast was dry  
With grief; and the thin air, my breath, was stained  
With the contagion of a mother's hate  
Breathed on her child's destroyer; aye, I heard  
Thy curse, the which, if thou rememberest not,  
Yet my innumerable seas and streams,  
Mountains, and caves, and winds, and yon wide air,  
And the inarticulate people of the dead,  
Preserve, a treasured spell. We meditate  
In secret joy and hope those dreadful words  
But dare not speak them.

PROMETHEUS. Venerable mother!

All else who live and suffer take from thee  
Some comfort; flowers, and fruits, and happy sounds,  
And love, though fleeting; these may not be mine,  
But mine own words, I pray, deny me not.

THE EARTH. They shall be told. Ere Babylon was dust,  
The Magus Zoroaster, my dead child,  
Met his own image walking in the garden.  
That apparition, sole of men, he saw.  
For know there are two worlds of life and death:  
One that which thou beholdest; but the other  
Is underneath the grave, where do inhabit  
The shadows of all forms that think and live

Till death unite them and they part no more;  
 Dreams and the light imaginings of men,  
 And all that fate creates or love desires,  
 Terrible, strange, sublime and beauteous shapes.  
 There thou art, and dost hang, a writhing shade,  
 'Mid whirlwind-peopled mountains; all the gods  
 Are there, and all the powers of nameless worlds,  
 Vast, sceptred phantoms; heroes, men, and beasts;  
 And Demogorgon, a tremendous gloom;  
 And he, the supreme Tyrant, on his throne  
 Of burning gold. Son, one of these shall utter  
 The curse which all remember. Call at will  
 Thine own ghost, or the ghost of Jupiter,  
 Hades or Typhon, or what mightier Gods  
 From all-prolific Evil, since thy ruin  
 Have sprung, and trampled on my prostrate sons.  
 Ask, and they must reply: so the revenge  
 Of the Supreme may sweep thro' vacant shades,  
 As rainy wind thro' the abandoned gate  
 Of a fallen palace.

PROMETHEUS. Mother, let not aught  
 Of that which may be evil, pass again  
 My lips, or those of aught resembling me.  
 Phantasm of Jupiter, arise, appear!

#### IONE

My wings are folded o'er mine ears:

My wings are crossèd o'er mine eyes:

Yet thro' their silver shade appears,

And thro' their lulling plumes arise,

A Shape, a throng of sounds;

May it be no ill to thee

O thou of many wounds!

Near whom, for our sweet sister's sake,

Ever thus we watch and wake.

## PANTHEA

The sound is of whirlwind underground  
Earthquake, and fire, and mountains cloven;  
The shape is awful like the sound,  
Clothed in dark purple, star-inwoven.  
A sceptre of pale gold  
To stay steps proud, o'er the slow cloud  
His veinèd hand doth hold.  
Cruel he looks, but calm and strong,  
Like one who does, not suffers wrong.

PHANTASM OF JUPITER. Why have the secret powers of this  
strange world

Driven me, a frail and empty phantom, hither  
On direst storms? What unaccustomed sounds  
Are hovering on my lips, unlike the voice  
With which our pallid race hold ghastly talk  
In darkness? And, proud sufferer, who art thou?

PROMETHEUS. Tremendous Image, as thou art must be  
He whom thou shadowest forth. I am his foe,  
The Titan. Speak the words which I would hear,  
Although no thought inform thine empty voice.

THE EARTH. Listen! And tho' your echoes must be mute,  
Gray mountains, and old woods, and haunted springs,  
Prophetic caves, and isle-surrounding streams,  
Rejoice to hear what yet ye cannot speak.

PHANTASM of JUPITER. A spirit seizes me and speaks within:  
It tears me as fire tears a thunder-cloud.

PANTHEA. See, how he lifts his mighty looks, the Heaven  
Darkens above.

IONE. He speaks! O shelter me!

PROMETHEUS. I see the curse on gestures proud and cold,  
And looks of firm defiance, and calm hate,  
And such despair as mocks itself with smiles,  
Written as on a scroll: yet speak: Oh, speak!

## PHANTASM OF JUPITER

Fiend, I defy thee! with a calm, fixed mind,  
All that thou canst inflict I bid thee do;  
Foul Tyrant both of Gods and Humankind,  
One only being shalt thou not subdue.  
Rain then thy plagues upon me here,  
Ghastly disease, and frenzying fear;  
And let alternate frost and fire  
Eat into me, and be thine ire  
Lightning, and cutting hail, and legioned forms  
Of furies, driving by upon the wounding storms.

Ay, do thy worst. Thou art omnipotent.  
O'er all things but thyself I gave thee power,  
And my own will. Be thy swift mischiefs sent  
To blast mankind, from yon ethereal tower.  
Let thy malignant spirit move  
In darkness over those I love:  
On me and mine I imprecate  
The utmost torture of thy hate;  
And thus devote to sleepless agony,  
This undeclining head, while thou must reign on high.

But thou, who art the God and Lord: O, thou,  
Who fillest with thy soul this world of woe,  
To whom all things of Earth and Heaven do bow  
In fear and worship: all-prevailing foe!  
I curse thee! let a sufferer's curse  
Clasp thee, his torturer, like remorse;  
Till thine Infinity shall be  
A robe of envenomed agony;

And thine Omnipotence a crown of pain,  
To cling like burning gold round thy dissolving brain.

Heap on thy soul, by virtue of this Curse  
Ill deeds, then be thou damned, beholding good;  
Both infinite as is the universe,  
And thou, and thy self-torturing solitude.  
An awful image of calm power  
Though now thou sittest, let the hour  
Come, when thou must appear to be  
That which thou art internally.

And after many a false and fruitless crime  
Scorn track thy lagging fall thro' boundless space and time.

PROMETHEUS. Were these my words, O, Parent?

THE EARTH. They were thine.

PROMETHEUS. It doth repent

me: words are quick and vain;

Grief for a while is blind, and so was mine.

I wish no living thing to suffer pain.

#### THE EARTH

Misery, Oh misery to me,  
That Jove at length should vanquish thee.

Wail, howl aloud, Land and Sea,  
The Earth's rent heart shall answer ye.

Howl, Spirits of the living and the dead,  
Your refuge, your defence lies fallen and vanquishèd.

#### FIRST ECHO

Lies fallen and vanquishèd!

#### SECOND ECHO

Fallen and vanquishèd!



## IONE

Fear not: 'tis but some passing spasm,  
The Titan is unvanquished still.  
But see, where thro' the azure chasm  
Of yon forked and snowy hill  
Trampling the slant winds on high  
With golden-sandalled feet, that glow  
Under plumes of purple dye,  
Like rose-ensanguined ivory,  
A Shape comes now,  
Stretching on high from his right hand  
A serpent-cinctured wand.

PANTHEA. 'Tis Jove's world-wandering herald, Mercury.

## IONE

And who are those with hydra tresses  
And iron wings that climb the wind,  
Whom the frowning God represses  
Like vapors steaming up behind,  
Clanging loud, an endless crowd—

## PANTHEA

These are Jove's tempest-walking hounds,  
Whom he gluts with groans and blood,  
When charioted on sulphurous cloud  
He bursts Heaven's bounds.

## IONE

Are they now led, from the thin dead  
On new pangs to be fed?

## PANTHEA

The Titan looks as ever, firm, not proud.

FIRST FURY. Ha! I scent life!

SECOND FURY. Let me but look into his eyes!

THIRD FURY. The hope of torturing him smells like a heap  
Of corpses, to a death-bird after battle.

FIRST FURY. Darest thou delay, O Herald! take cheer,  
Hounds

Of Hell: what if the Son of Maia soon  
Should make us food and sport—who can please long  
The Omnipotent?

MERCURY. Back to your towers of iron,  
And gnash, beside the streams of fire and wail,  
Your foodless teeth. Geryon, arise! and Gorgon,  
Chimæra, and thou Sphinx, subtlest of fiends  
Who ministered to Thebes Heaven's poisoned wine,  
Unnatural love, and more unnatural hate:  
These shall perform your task.

FIRST FURY. Oh, mercy! mercy!  
We die with our desire: drive us not back!

MERCURY. Crouch then in silence.

Awful Sufferer

To thee unwilling, most unwillingly  
I come, by the great Father's will driven down,  
To execute a doom of new revenge.  
Alas! I pity thee, and hate myself  
That I can do no more: aye from thy sight  
Returning, for a season, Heaven seems Hell,  
So thy worn form pursues me night and day,  
Smiling reproach. Wise art thou, firm and good,  
But vainly wouldst stand forth alone in strife  
Against the Omnipotent; as yon clear lamps  
That measure and divide the weary years  
From which there is no refuge, long have taught

And long must teach. Even now thy Torturer arms  
With the strange might of unimagined pains  
The powers who scheme slow agonies in Hell,  
And my commission is to lead them here,  
Or what more subtle, foul, or savage fiends  
People the abyss, and leave them to their task.  
Be it not so! there is a secret known  
To thee, and to none else of living things,  
Which may transfer the sceptre of wide Heaven,  
The fear of which perplexes the Supreme:  
Clothe it in words, and bid it clasp his throne  
In intercession; bend thy soul in prayer,  
And like a suppliant in some gorgeous fane,  
Let the will kneel within thy haughty heart:  
For benefits and meek submission tame  
The fiercest and the mightiest.

PROMETHEUS.                      Evil minds  
Change good to their own nature. I gave all  
He has; and in return he chains me here  
Years, ages, night and day: whether the Sun  
Split my parched skin, or in the moony night  
The crystal-wingèd snow cling round my hair:  
Whilst my belovèd race is trampled down  
By his thought-executing ministers.  
Such is the tyrant's recompense: 'tis just:  
He who is evil can receive no good;  
And for a world bestowed, or a friend lost,  
He can feel hate, fear, shame; not gratitude:  
He but requites me for his own misdeed.  
Kindness to such is keen reproach, which breaks  
With bitter stings the light sleep of Revenge.  
Submission, thou dost know I cannot try:  
For what submission but that fatal word,  
The death-seal of mankind's captivity,  
Like the Sicilian's hair-suspended sword,  
Which trembles o'er his crown, would he accept,  
Or could I yield? Which yet I will not yield.

Let others flatter Crime, where it sits throned  
 In brief Omnipotence: secure are they:  
 For Justice, when triumphant, will weep down  
 Pity, not punishment, on her own wrongs,  
 Too much avenged by those who err. I wait,  
 Enduring thus, the retributive hour  
 Which since we spake is even nearer now.  
 But hark, the hell-hounds clamor: fear delay;  
 Behold! Heaven lowers under thy Father's frown.

MERCURY. Oh, that we might be spared: I to inflict  
 And thou to suffer! Once more answer me:  
 Thou knowest not the period of Jove's power?

PROMETHEUS. I know but this, that it must come.

MERCURY. Alas!

Thou canst not count thy years to come of pain?

PROMETHEUS. They last while Jove must reign: nor more,  
 nor less

Do I desire or fear.

MERCURY. Yet pause, and plunge  
 Into Eternity, where recorded time,  
 Even all that we imagine, age on age,  
 Seems but a point, and the reluctant mind  
 Flags wearily in its unending flight,  
 Till it sink, dizzy, blind, lost, shelterless;  
 Perchance it has not numbered the slow years  
 Which thou must spend in torture, unreprieved?

PROMETHEUS. Perchance no thought can count them, yet  
 they pass.

MERCURY. If thou might'st dwell among the Gods the  
 while  
 Lapped in voluptuous joy?

PROMETHEUS. I would not quit  
 This bleak ravine, these unrepentant pains.

MERCURY. Alas! I wonder at, yet pity thee.

PROMETHEUS. Pity the self-despising slaves of Heaven,  
 Not me, within whose mind sits peace serene,  
 As light in the sun, throned: how vain is talk!

Call up the fiends.

IONE. O, sister, look! White fire  
Has cloven to the roots yon huge snow-loaded cedar;  
How fearfully God's thunder howls behind!

MERCURY. I must obey his words and thine: alas!  
Most heavily remorse hangs at my heart!

PANTHEA. See where the child of Heaven, with wingèd feet,  
Runs down the slanted sunlight of the dawn.

IONE. Dear sister, close thy plumes over thine eyes  
Lest thou behold and die: they come: they come  
Blackening the birth of day with countless wings,  
And hollow underneath, like death.

FIRST FURY. Prometheus!"

SECOND FURY. Immortal Titan!

THIRD FURY. Champion of Heaven's  
slaves!

PROMETHEUS. He whom some dreadful voice invokes is here,  
Prometheus, the chained Titan. Horrible forms,  
What and who are ye? Never yet there came  
Phantasms so foul thro' monster-teeming Hell  
From the all-miscreative brain of Jove;  
Whilst I behold such execrable shapes,  
Methinks I grow like what I contemplate,  
And laugh and stare in loathsome sympathy.

FIRST FURY. We are the ministers of pain, and fear,  
And disappointment, and mistrust, and hate,  
And clinging crime; and as lean dogs pursue  
Thro' wood and lake some struck and sobbing fawn,  
We track all things that weep, and bleed, and live,  
When the great King betrays them to our will.

PROMETHEUS. Oh! many fearful natures in one name,  
I know ye; and these lakes and echoes know  
The darkness and the clangor of your wings.  
But why more hideous than your loathèd selves  
Gather ye up in legions from the deep?

SECOND FURY. We knew not that: Sisters, rejoice, rejoice!

PROMETHEUS. Can aught exult in its deformity?

SECOND FURY. The beauty of delight makes lovers glad,  
Gazing on one another: so are we.  
As from the rose which the pale priestess kneels  
To gather for her festal crown of flowers  
The ærial crimson falls, flushing her cheek,  
So from our victim's destined agony  
The shade which is our form invests us round,  
Else we are shapeless as our mother Night.

PROMETHEUS. I laugh your power, and his who sent you  
here,  
To lowest scorn. Pour forth the cup of pain.

FIRST FURY. Thou thinkest we will rend thee bone from  
bone,  
And nerve from nerve, working like fire within?

PROMETHEUS. Pain is my element, as hate is thine;  
Ye rend me now: I care not.

SECOND FURY. Dost imagine  
We will but laugh into thy lidless eyes?

PROMETHEUS. I weigh not what ye do, but what ye suffer,  
Being evil. Cruel was the power which called  
You, or aught else so wretched, into light.

THIRD FURY. Thou think'st we will live thro' thee, one by  
one,

Like animal life, and tho' we can obscure not  
The soul which burns within, that we will dwell  
Beside it, like a vain loud multitude  
Vexing the self-content of wisest men:  
That we will be dread thought beneath thy brain,  
And foul desire round thine astonished heart,  
And blood within thy labyrinthine veins  
Crawling like agony.

PROMETHEUS. Why, ye are thus now;  
Yet am I king over myself, and rule  
The torturing and conflicting throngs within,  
As Jove rules you when Hell grows mutinous.

## CHORUS OF FURIES

From the ends of the earth, from the ends of the earth.  
Where the night has its grave and the morning its birth,

Come, come, come!

Oh, ye who shake hills with the scream of your mirth,  
When cities sink howling in ruin; and ye  
Who with wingless footsteps trample the sea,  
And close upon Shipwreck and Famine's track,  
Sit chattering with joy on the foodless wreck,

Come, come, come!

Leave the bed, low, cold and red,  
Strewed beneath a nation dead;  
Leave the hatred, as in ashes

Fire is left for future burning:  
It will burst in bloodier fashion,

When ye stir it, soon returning:  
Leave the self-contempt implanted  
In young spirits, sense-enchanted,  
Misery's yet unkindled fuel:  
Leave Hell's secrets half unchanted  
To the maniac dreamer; cruel  
More than ye can be with hate  
Is he with fear.

Come, come, come!

We are steaming up from Hell's wide gate,  
And we burthen the blast of the atmosphere,  
But vainly we toil till ye come here.

IONE. Sister, I hear the thunder of new wings.

PANTHEA. These solid mountains quiver with the sound  
Even as the tremulous air; their shadows make  
The space within my plumes more black than night.



## FIRST FURY

Your call was as a wingèd car  
Driven on whirlwinds fast and far;  
It rapt us from red gulf of war.

## SECOND FURY

From wide cities, famine-wasted;

## THIRD FURY

Groans half heard, and blood untasted;

## FOURTH FURY

Kingly conclaves stern and cold,  
Where blood with gold is bought and sold;

## FIFTH FURY

From the furnace, white and hot,  
In which—

## A FURY

Speak not: whisper not  
I know all that ye would tell,  
But to speak might break the spell  
Which must bend the Invincible,  
The stern of thought;  
He yet defies the deepest power of Hell.

## FURY

Tear the veil!

## ANOTHER FURY

It is torn.

## CHORUS

The pale stars of the morn  
 Shine on a misery, dire to be borne.  
 Dost thou faint, mighty Titan? We laugh thee to scorn.  
 Dost thou boast the clear knowledge thou waken'dst for man?  
 Then was kindled within him a thirst which outran  
 Those perishing waters; a thirst of fierce fever,  
 Hope, love, doubt, desire, which consume him for ever.

One came forth of gentle worth  
 Smiling on the sanguine earth;  
 His words outlived him, like swift poison,

Withering up truth, peace, and pity.  
 Look! where round the wide horizon

Many a million-peopled city  
 Vomits smoke in the bright air.  
 Mark that outcry of despair!

'Tis his mild and gentle ghost  
 Wailing for the faith he kindled:

Look again, the flames almost  
 To a glow-worm's lamp have dwindled:  
 The survivors round the embers  
 Gather in dread.

Joy, joy, joy!  
 Past ages crowd on thee, but each one remembers,  
 And the future is dark, and the present is spread  
 Like a pillow of thorns for thy slumberless head.

## SEMICHORUS I

Drops of bloody agony flow  
 From his white and quivering brow.  
 Grant a little respite now:  
 See a disenchanted nation  
 Springs like day from desolation;  
 To Truth its state is dedicate,  
 And Freedom leads it forth, her mate;

A legionèd band of linkèd brothers  
Whom Love calls children—

## SEMICHORUS II

'Tis another's:

See how kindred murder kin:

'Tis the vintage time for death and sin;

Blood, like new wine, bubbles within;

Till Despair smothers

The struggling world, which slaves and tyrants win.

[*All the FURIES vanish except one.*]

IONE. Hark, sister! what a low yet dreadful groan.

Quite unsuppressed is tearing up the heart

Of the good Titan, as storms tear the deep,

And beasts hear the sea moan in inland caves.

Darest thou observe how the fiends torture him?

PANTHEA. Alas! I looked forth twice, but will no more.

IONE. What didst thou see?

PANTHEA. A woful sight: a youth

With patient looks nailed to a crucifix,

IONE. What next?

PANTHEA. The heaven around, the earth below

Was peopled with thick shapes of human death,

All horrible, and wrought by human hands,

And some appeared the work of human hearts,

For men were slowly killed by frowns and smiles:

And other sights too foul to speak and live

Were wandering by. Let us not tempt worse fear

By looking forth: those groans are grief enough.

FURY. Behold an emblem: those who do endure

Deep wrongs for man, and scorn, and chains, but heap

Thousandfold torment on themselves and him.

PROMETHEUS. Remit the anguish of that lighted stare;

Close those wan lips; let that thorn-wounded brow

Stream not with blood; it mingles with thy tears!

Fix, fix those tortured orbs in peace and death,

So thy sick throes shake not that crucifix,  
 So those pale fingers play not with thy gore.  
 O, horrible! Thy name I will not speak,  
 It hath become a curse. I see, I see  
 The wise, the mild, the lofty, and the just,  
 Whom thy slaves hate for being like to thee,  
 Some hunted by foul lies from their heart's home,  
 An early-chosen, late-lamented home;  
 As hooded ounces cling to the driven hind;  
 Some linked to corpses in unwholesome cells:  
 Some—Hear I not the multitude laugh loud? —  
 Impaled in lingering fire: and mighty realms  
 Float by my feet, like sea-uprooted isles,  
 Whose sons are kneaded down in common blood  
 By the red light of their own burning homes.

FURY. Blood thou canst see, and fire; and canst hear  
 groans;  
 Worse things, unheard, unseen, remain behind.

PROMETHEUS. Worse?

FURY. In each human heart terror survives  
 The ruin it has gorged: the loftiest fear  
 All that they would disdain to think were true:  
 Hypocrisy and custom make their minds  
 The fanes of many a worship, now outworn.  
 They dare not devise good for man's estate,  
 And yet they know not that they do not dare.  
 The good want power, but to weep barren tears.  
 The powerful goodness want: worse need for them.  
 The wise want love; and those who love want wisdom;  
 And all best things are thus confused to ill.  
 Many are strong and rich, and would be just,  
 But live among their suffering fellowmen  
 As if none felt: they know not what they do.

PROMETHEUS. Thy words are like a cloud of winged  
 snakes;  
 And yet I pity those they torture not.

FURY. Thou pitiest them? I speak no more! [*Vanishes.*]

PROMETHEUS.

Ah woe!

Ah woe! Alas! pain, pain ever, for ever!  
I close my tearless eyes, but see more clear  
Thy works within my woe-illumed mind,  
Thou subtle tyrant! Peace is in the grave.  
The grave hides all things beautiful and good:  
I am a God and cannot find it there,  
Nor would I seek it: for, though dread revenge,  
This is defeat, fierce king, not victory.  
The sights with which thou torturest gird my soul  
With new endurance, till the hour arrives  
When they shall be no types of things which are.

PANTHEA. Alas! what sawest thou?

PROMETHEUS. There are two woes:

To speak, and to behold; thou spare me one.  
Names are there, Nature's sacred watchwords, they  
Were borne aloft in bright emblazonry;  
The nations thronged around, and cried aloud,  
As with one voice, Truth, liberty, and love!  
Suddenly fierce confusion fell from heaven  
Among them: there was strife, deceit and fear:  
Tyrants rushed in, and did divide the spoil.  
This was the shadow of the truth I saw.

THE EARTH. I felt thy torture, son, with such mixed joy  
As pain and virtue give. To cheer thy state  
I bid ascend those subtle and fair spirits,  
Whose homes are the dim caves of human thought,  
And who inhabit, as birds wing the wind,  
Its world-surrounding ether: they behold  
Beyond that twilight realm, as in a glass,  
The future: may they speak comfort to thee!

PANTHEA. Look, sister, where a troop of spirits gather,  
Like flocks of clouds in spring's delightful weather.  
Thronging in the blue air!

IONE. And see! more come,  
Like fountain-vapors when the winds are dumb,  
That climb up the ravine in scattered lines.

And, hark! is it the music of the pines?  
Is it the lake? Is it the waterfall?

PANTHEA. 'Tis something sadder, sweeter far than all.

#### CHORUS OF SPIRITS

From unremembered ages we  
Gentle guides and guardians be  
Of heaven-oppressed mortality;  
And we breathe, and sicken not,  
The atmosphere of human thought.  
Be it dim, and dank, and gray,  
Like a storm-extinguished day,  
Travelled o'er by dying gleams;  
Be it bright as all between  
Cloudless skies and windless streams,  
Silent, liquid, and serene;  
As the birds within the wind,  
As the fish within the wave,  
As the thoughts of man's own mind  
Float thro' all above the grave;  
We make there our liquid lair,  
Voyaging cloudlike and unpent  
Thro' the boundless element:  
Thence we bear the prophecy  
Which begins and ends in thee!

IONE. More yet come, one by one: the air around them  
Looks radiant as the air around a star.

#### FIRST SPIRIT

On a battle-trumpet's blast  
I fled hither, fast, fast, fast,  
'Mid the darkness upward cast.  
From the dust of creeds outworn,  
From the tyrant's banner torn,

Gathering 'round me, onward borne,  
There was mingled many a cry—  
Freedom! Hope! Death! Victory!  
Till they faded thro' the sky;  
And one sound, above, around,  
One sound beneath, around, above,  
Was moving; 'twas the soul of love;  
'Twas the hope, the prophecy,  
Which begins and ends in thee.

## SECOND SPIRIT

A rainbow's arch stood on the sea,  
Which rocked beneath, immovably;  
And the triumphant storm did flee,  
Like a conqueror, swift and proud,  
Between, with many a captive cloud,  
A shapeless, dark and rapid crowd,  
Each by lightning riven in half:  
I heard the thunder hoarsely laugh:  
Mighty fleets were strewn like chaff  
And spread beneath a hell of death  
O'er the white waters. I alit  
On a great ship lightning-split,  
And speeded hither on the sigh  
Of one who gave an enemy  
His plank, then plunged aside to die.

## THIRD SPIRIT

I sate beside a sage's bed,  
And the lamp was burning red  
Near the book where he had fed,  
When a Dream with plumes of flame,  
To his pillow hovering came,  
And I knew it was the same  
Which had kindled long ago



Pity, eloquence, and woe;  
And the world awhile below  
Wore the shade its lustre made.  
It has borne me here as fleet  
As Desire's lightning feet;  
I must ride it back ere morrow,  
Or the sage will wake in sorrow.

## FOURTH SPIRIT

On a poet's lips I slept  
Dreaming like a love-adept  
In the sound his breathing kept;  
Nor seeks nor finds he mortal blisses,  
But feeds on the ærial kisses  
Of shapes that haunt thought's wildernesses.  
He will watch from dawn to gloom  
The lake-reflected sun illumine  
The yellow bees in the ivy-bloom,  
Nor heed nor see, what things they be;  
But from these create he can  
Forms more real than living man,  
Nurslings of immortality!  
One of these awakened me,  
And I sped to succor thee.

## IONE

Behold'st thou not two shapes from the east and west  
Come, as two doves to one beloved nest,  
Twin nurslings of the all-sustaining air  
On swift still wings glide down the atmosphere?  
And, hark! their sweet, sad voices! 'tis despair  
Mingled with love and then dissolved in sound.

PANTHEA. Canst thou speak, sister? all my words are  
drowned.

IONE. Their beauty gives me voice. See how they float  
On their sustaining wings of skiey grain,

Orange and azure deepening into gold:  
Their soft smiles light the air like a star's fire

## CHORUS OF SPIRITS

Hast thou beheld the form of love?

## FIFTH SPIRIT

As over wide dominions  
I sped, like some swift cloud that wings the wide air's  
wildernesses,  
That planet-crested shape swept by on lightning-braided  
pinions,  
Scattering the liquid joy of life from his ambrosial tresses:  
His footsteps paved the world with light; but as I past 'twas  
fading,  
And hollow Ruin yawned behind: great sages bound in  
madness,  
And headless patriots, and pale youths who perished, unup-  
braiding,  
Gleamed in the night. I wandered o'er, till thou, O King of  
sadness,  
Turned by thy smile the worst I saw to recollected gladness.

## SIXTH SPIRIT

Ah, Sister! Desolation is a delicate thing:  
It walks not on the earth, it floats not on the air,  
But treads with killing footstep, and fans with silent wing  
The tender hopes which in their hearts the best and gentlest  
bear;  
Who, soothed to false repose by the fanning plumes above  
And the music-stirring motion of its soft and busy feet,  
Dream visions of ærial joy, and call the monster, Love,  
And wake, and find the shadow Pain, as he whom now we  
greet.

## CHORUS

Tho' Ruin now Love's shadow be,  
 Following him, destroyingly,  
 On Death's white and wingèd steed  
 Which the fleetest cannot flee.

Trampling down both flower and weed,  
 Man and beast, and foul and fair,  
 Like a tempest thro' the air;  
 Thou shalt quell this horseman grim,  
 Woundless though in heart or limb.

PROMETHEUS. Spirits! how know ye this shall be?

## CHORUS

In the atmosphere we breathe,  
 As buds grow red when the snow-storms flee,

From spring gathering up beneath,  
 Whose mild winds shake the elder brake,  
 And the wandering herdsmen know  
 That the white-thorn soon will blow:  
 Wisdom, Justice, Love, and Peace,  
 When they struggle to increase,

Are to us as soft winds be  
 To shepherd boys, the prophecy  
 Which begins and ends in thee.

IONE. Where are the Spirits fled?

PANTHEA.

Only a sense

Remains of them, like the omnipotence  
 Of music, when the inspired voice and lute  
 Languish, ere yet the réponses are mute,  
 Which thro' the deep and labyrinthine soul,  
 Like echoes thro' long caverns, wind and roll.

PROMETHEUS. How fair these airborne shapes! and yet I  
 feel

Most vain all hope but love; and thou art far,  
 Asia! who, when my being overflowed,

Wert like a golden chalice to bright wine  
Which else had sunk into the thirsty dust.  
All things are still: alas! how heavily  
This quiet morning weighs upon my heart;  
Tho' I should dream I could even sleep with grief  
If slumber were denied not. I would fain  
Be what it is my destiny to be,  
The savior and the strength of suffering man,  
Or sink into the original gulf of things:  
There is no agony, and no solace left;  
Earth can console, Heaven can torment no more.

PANTHEA. Hast thou forgotten one who watches thee  
The cold dark night, and never sleeps but when  
The shadow of thy spirit falls on her?

PROMETHEUS. I said all hope was vain but love: thou  
lovest.

PANTHEA. Deeply in truth; but the eastern star looks  
white,

And Asia waits in that far Indian vale  
The scene of her sad exile; rugged once  
And desolate and frozen, like this ravine;  
But now invested with fair flowers and herbs,  
And haunted by sweet airs and sounds, which flow  
Among the woods and waters, from the ether  
Of her transforming presence, which would fade  
If it were mingled not with thine. Farewell!

## ACT. II

SCENE I.—*Morning. A Lovely Vale in the Indian Caucasus.*  
*Asia alone.*

ASIA. From all the blasts of heaven thou hast descended:  
Yes, like a spirit, like a thought, which makes  
Unwonted tears throng to the horny eyes,

And beatings haunt the desolated heart,  
 Which should have learnt repose: thou hast descended  
 Cradled in tempests; thou dost wake, O Spring!  
 O child of many winds! As suddenly  
 Thou comest as the memory of a dream,  
 Which now is sad because it hath been sweet;  
 Like genius, or like joy which riseth up  
 As from the earth, clothing with golden clouds  
 The desert of our life.  
 This is the season, this the day, the hour;  
 At sunrise thou shouldst come, sweet sister mine,  
 Too long desired, too long delaying, come!  
 How like death-worms the wingless moments crawl!  
 The point of one white star is quivering still  
 Deep in the orange light of widening morn  
 Beyond the purple mountains: thro' a chasm  
 Of wind-divided mist the darker lake  
 Reflects it: now it wanes: it gleams again  
 As the waves fade, and as the burning threads  
 Of woven cloud unravel in pale air:  
 'Tis lost! and thro' yon peaks of cloudlike snow  
 The roseate sunlight quivers: hear I not  
 The Æolian music of her sea-green plumes  
 Winnowing the crimson dawn?

[PANTHEA enters.]

I feel, I see  
 Those eyes which burn thro' smiles that fade in tears  
 Like stars half quenched in mists of silver dew.  
 Belovèd and most beautiful, who wearest  
 The shadow of that soul by which I live,  
 How late thou art! the spherèd sun had climbed  
 The sea: my heart was sick with hope, before  
 The printless air felt thy belated plumes.

PANTHEA. Pardon, great Sister! but my wings were faint  
 With the delight of a remembered dream,  
 As are the noontide plumes of summer winds

Satiate with sweet flowers. I was wont to sleep  
Peacefully, and awake refreshed and calm  
Before the sacred Titan's fall, and thy  
Unhappy love, had made, thro' use and pity,  
Both love and woe familiar to my heart  
As they had grown to thine: erewhile I slept  
Under the glaucous caverns of old Ocean  
Within dim bowers of green and purple moss,  
Our young Ione's soft and milky arms  
Locked then, as now, behind my dark, moist hair,  
While my shut eyes and cheek were pressed within  
The folded depth of her life-breathing bosom:  
But not as now, since I am made the wind  
Which fails beneath the music that I bear  
Of thy most wordless converse; since dissolved  
Into the sense with which love talks, my rest  
Was troubled and yet sweet; my waking hours  
Too full of care and pain.

ASIA. Lift up thine eyes, and let me read thy dream.

PANTHEA.

As I have said

With our sea-sister at his feet I slept.  
The mountain mists, condensing at our voice  
Under the moon, had spread their snowy flakes,  
From the keen ice shielding our linkèd sleep.  
Then two dreams came. One, I remember not.  
But in the other his pale wound-worn limbs  
Fell from Prometheus, and the azure night  
Grew radiant with the glory of that form  
Which lives unchanged within, and his voice fell  
Like music which makes giddy the dim brain,  
Faint with intoxication of keen joy:  
"Sister of her whose footsteps pave the world  
With loveliness—more fair than aught but her,  
Whose shadow thou art—lift thine eyes on me."  
I lifted them: the overpowering light  
Of that immortal shape and was shadowed o'er  
By love; which, from his soft and flowing limbs,

And passion-parted lips, and keen, faint eyes,  
Steamed forth like vaporous fire; an atmosphere  
Which wrapt me in its all-dissolving power,  
As the warm ether of the morning sun  
Wraps ere it drinks some cloud of wandering dew.  
I saw not, heard not, moved not, only felt  
His presence flow and mingle thro' my blood  
Till it became his life, and his grew mine,  
And I was thus absorbed, until it passed,  
And like the vapors when the sun sinks down,  
Gathering again in drops upon the pines,  
And tremulous as they, in the deep night  
My being was condensed; and as the rays  
Of thought were slowly gathered, I could hear  
His voice, whose accents lingered ere they died  
Like footsteps of weak melody: thy name  
Among the many sounds alone I heard  
Of what might be articulate; tho' still  
I listened thro' the night when sound was none.  
Ione wakened then, and said to me:  
"Canst thou divine what troubles me to-night?  
I always knew what I desired before,  
Nor ever found delight to wish in vain.  
But now I cannot tell thee what I seek:  
I know not; something sweet, since it is sweet  
Even to desire; it is thy sport, false sister;  
Thou hast discovered some enchantment old,  
Whose spells have stolen my spirit as I slept  
And mingled it with thine: for when just now  
We kissed, I felt within thy parted lips  
The sweet air that sustained me, and the warmth  
Of the life-blood, for loss of which I faint,  
Quivered between our intertwining arms."  
I answered not, for the Eastern star grew pale,  
But fled to thee.

ASIA. Thou speakest, but thy words  
Are as the air: I feel them not: Oh, lift



Thine eyes, that I may read his written soul!

PANTHEA. I lift them tho' they droop beneath the load  
Of that they would express: what canst thou see  
But thine own fairest shadow imaged there?

ASIA. Thine eyes are like the deep, blue, boundless heaven  
Contracted to two circles underneath  
Their long, fine lashes; dark, far, measureless,  
Orb within orb, and line thro' line inwoven.

PANTHEA. Why lookest thou as if a spirit past?

ASIA. There is a change: beyond their inmost depth  
I see a shade, a shape: 'tis He, arrayed  
In the soft light of his own smiles, which spread  
Like radiance from the cloud-surrounded moon.  
Prometheus, it is thine! depart not yet!  
Say not those smiles that we shall meet again  
Within that bright pavilion which their beams  
Shall build on the waste world? The dream is told.  
What shape is that between us? Its rude hair  
Roughens the wind that lifts it, its regard  
Is wild and quick, yet 'tis a thing of air,  
For thro' its gray robe gleams the golden dew  
Whose stars the noon has quenched not.

DREAM.

Follow! Follow!

PANTHEA. It is mine other dream.

ASIA.

It disappears.

PANTHEA. It passes now into my mind. Methought

As we sate here, the flower-infolding buds  
Burst on yon lightning-blasted almond-tree,  
When swift from the white Scythian wilderness  
A wind swept forth wrinkling the Earth with frost:  
I looked, and all the blossoms were blown down;  
But on each leaf was stamped, as the blue bells  
Of Hyacinth tell Apollo's written grief,  
*O, Follow, Follow!*

ASIA.

As you speak, your words

Fill, pause by pause, my own forgotten sleep  
With shapes. Methought among the lawns together

We wandered, underneath the young gray dawn,  
 And multitudes of dense white fleecy clouds  
 Were wandering in thick flocks along the mountains  
 Shepherded by the slow, unwilling wind;  
 And the white dew on the new bladed grass,  
 Just piercing the dark earth, hung silently:  
 And there was more which I remember not:  
 But on the shadows of the morning clouds,  
 Athwart the purple mountain slope, was written  
*Follow, O, Follow!* as they vanished by,  
 And on each herb, from which Heaven's dew had fallen,  
 The like was stamped, as with a withering fire.  
 A wind arose among the pines; it shook  
 The clinging music from their boughs, and then  
 Low, sweet, faint sounds, like the farewell of ghosts,  
 Were heard: *O, Follow, Follow, Follow me!*  
 And then I said: "Panthea, look on me."  
 But in the depth of those belovèd eyes  
 Still I saw, *Follow, Follow!*

ECHO. Follow, follow!

PANTHEA. The crags, this clear spring morning, mock our  
 voices

As they were spirit-tongued.

ASIA. It is some being  
 Around the crags. What fine clear sounds! O, list!

### ECHOES [*unseen*]

Echoes we: listen!  
 We cannot stay:  
 As dew-stars glisten  
 Then fade away—  
 Child of Ocean!

ASIA. Hark! Spirits speak. The liquid réponses  
 Of their aërial tongues yet sound.

PANTHEA. I hear.

## ECHOES.

O, follow, follow,  
As our voice recedeth  
Thro' the caverns hollow,  
Where the forest spreadeth;

[*More distant*]

O, follow, follow!  
Thro' the caverns hollow,  
As the song floats thou pursue,  
Where the wild bee never flew,  
Thro' the noontide darkness deep,  
By the odor-breathing sleep  
Of faint night-flowers, and the waves  
At the fountain-lighted caves,  
While our music, wild and sweet,  
Mocks thy gently falling feet,  
Child of Ocean!

ASIA. Shall we pursue the sound? It grows more faint  
And distant.

PANTHEA. List! the strain floats nearer now.

## ECHOES.

In the world unknown  
Sleeps a voice unspoken;  
By thy step alone  
Can its rest be broken;  
Child of Ocean!

ASIA. How the notes sink upon the ebbing wind!

## ECHOES.

O, follow, follow!  
Thro' the caverns hollow,



By the swift Heavens that cannot stay,  
It scatters drops of golden light,  
Like lines of rain that ne'er unite:  
And the gloom divine is all around.  
And underneath is the mossy ground.

## SEMICHORUS II

There the voluptuous nightingales,  
Are awake thro' all the broad noonday.  
When one with bliss or sadness fails,  
And thro' the windless ivy-boughs,  
Sick with sweet love, droops dying away  
On its mate's music-panting bosom;  
Another from the swinging blossom,  
Watching to catch the languid close  
Of the last strain, then lifts on high  
The wings of the weak melody,  
Till some new strain of feeling bear  
The song, and all the woods are mute;  
When there is heard thro' the dim air  
The rush of wings, and rising there  
Like many a lake-surrounded flute,  
Sounds overflow the listener's brain  
So sweet, that joy is almost pain.

## SEMICHORUS I

There those enchanted eddies play  
Of echoes, music-tongued, which draw,  
By Demogorgon's mighty law,  
With melting rapture, or sweet awe,  
All spirits on that secret way;  
As inland boats are driven to Ocean  
Down streams made strong with mountain-thaw;  
And first there comes a gentle sound  
To those in talk or slumber bound

And wakes the destined. Soft emotion  
Attracts, impels them: those who saw  
Say from the breathing earth behind  
There steams a plume-uplifting wind  
Which drives them on their path, while they  
Believe their own swift wings and feet  
The sweet desires within obey:  
And so they float upon their way,  
Until, still sweet, but loud and strong,  
The storm of sound is driven along,  
Sucked up and hurrying: as they fleet  
Behind, its gathering billows meet  
And to the fatal mountain bear  
Like clouds amid the yielding air.

FIRST FAUN. Canst thou imagine where those spirits live  
Which make such delicate music in the woods?  
We haunt within the least frequented caves  
And closest coverts, and we know these wilds,  
Yet never meet them, tho' we hear them oft:  
Where may they hide themselves?

SECOND FAUN.

'Tis hard to tell:

I have heard those more skilled in the spirits say,  
The bubbles, which the enchantment of the sun  
Sucks from the pale faint water-flowers that pave  
The oozy bottom of clear lakes and pools,  
Are the pavilions where such dwell and float  
Under the green and golden atmosphere  
Which noontide kindles thro' the woven leaves;  
And when these burst, and the thin fiery air,  
The which they breathed within those lucent domes,  
Ascends to flow like meteors thro' the night,  
They ride on them, and rein their headlong speed,  
And bow their burning crests, and glide in fire  
Under the waters of the earth again.

FIRST FAUN. If such live thus, have others other lives,  
Under pink blossoms 'or within the bells  
Of meadow flowers, or folded violets deep,

Or on their dying odors, when they die,  
Or in the sunlight of the spheréd dew?

SECOND FAUN. Ay, many more which we may well  
divine.

But, should we stay to speak, noontide would come,  
And thwart Silenus find his goats undrawn,  
And grudge to sing those wise and lovely songs  
Of fate, and chance, and God, and Chaos old,  
And Love, and the chained Titan's woeful doom,  
And how he shall be loosed, and make the earth  
One brotherhood: delightful strains which cheer  
Our solitary twilights, and which charm  
To silence the unenvying nightingales.

SCENE III—*A Pinnacle of Rock among Mountains. Asia and Panthea.*

PANTHEA. Hither the sound has borne us—to the realm  
Of Demogorgon, and the mighty portal,  
Like a volcano's meteor-breathing chasm,  
Whence the oracular vapor is hurled up  
Which lonely men drink wandering in their youth,  
And call truth, virtue, love, genius, or joy,  
That maddening wine of life, whose dregs they drain  
To deep intoxication; and uplift,  
Like Mænads who cry loud, Evøe! Evøe!  
The voice which is contagion to the world.

ASIA. Fit throne for such a power! Magnificent!  
How glorious art thou, Earth! And if thou be  
The shadow of some spirit lovelier still,  
Though evil stain its work, and it should be  
Like its creation, weak yet beautiful,  
I could fall down and worship that and thee.  
Even now my heart adoreth: Wonderful!  
Look, sister, ere the vapor dim thy brain:  
Beneath is a wide plain of billowy mist,



As a lake, paving in the morning sky,  
 With azure waves which burst in silver light,  
 Some Indian vale. Behold it, rolling on  
 Under the curdling winds, and islanding  
 The peak whereon we stand, midway, around,  
 Encinctured by the dark and blooming forests,  
 Dim twilight-lawns, and stream-illumined caves,  
 And wind-enchanted shapes of wandering mist;  
 And far on high the keen sky-cleaving mountains  
 From icy spires of sun-like radiance fling  
 The dawn, as lifted Ocean's dazzling spray,  
 From some Atlantic islet scattered up,  
 Spangles the wind with lamp-like waterdrops.  
 The vale is girdled with their walls, a howl  
 Of cataracts from their thaw-cloven ravines,  
 Satiates the listening wind, continuous, vast,  
 Awful as silence. Hark! the rushing snow!  
 The sun-awakened avalanche! whose mass,  
 Thrice sifted by the storm, had gathered there  
 Flake after flake, in heaven-defying minds  
 As thought by thought is piled, till some great truth  
 Is loosened, and the nations echo round,  
 Shaken to their roots, as do the mountains now.

PANTHEA. Look how the gusty sea of mist is breaking  
 In crimson foam, even at our feet! it rises  
 As Ocean at the enchantment of the moon  
 Round foodless men wrecked on some oozy isle.

ASIA. The fragments of the cloud are scattered up;  
 The wind that lifts them disentwines my hair;  
 Its billows now sweep o'er mine eyes; my brain  
 Grows dizzy; I see thin shapes within the mist.

PANTHEA. A countenance with beckoning smiles: there  
 burns  
 An azure fire within its golden locks!  
 Another and another: hark! they speak!

## SONG OF SPIRITS

To the deep, to the deep,  
                    Down, down!  
Through the shade of sleep,  
Through the cloudy strife  
Of Death and of Life;  
Through the veil and the bar  
Of things which seem and are  
Even to the steps of the remotest throne,  
                    Down, down!

While the sound whirls around,  
                    Down, down!  
As the fawn draws the hound,  
As the lightning the vapor,  
As the weak moth the taper;  
Death, despair; love, sorrow;  
Time both; to-day, to-morrow;  
As steel obeys the spirit of the stone,  
                    Down, down!

Through the gray, void abysm,  
                    Down, down!  
Where the air is no prism,  
And the moon and stars are not,  
And the cavern-crag wear not  
The radiance of Heaven,  
Nor the gloom to Earth given,  
Where there is one pervading, one alone,  
                    Down, down!

In the depth of the deep,  
                    Down, down!  
Like veiled lightning asleep,  
Like the spark nursed in embers,  
The last look Love remembers,

Like a diamond, which shines  
 On the dark wealth of mines,  
 A spell is treasured but for thee alone,  
                     Down, down!

We have bound thee, we guide thee;  
                     Down, down!  
 With the bright form beside thee;  
 Resist not the weakness,  
 Such strength is in meekness  
 That the Eternal, the Immortal,  
 Must unloose through life's portal  
 The snake-like Doom coiled underneath his throne  
                     By that alone.

SCENE IV—*The Cave of Demogorgon.*

[ASIA and PANTHEA.]

PANTHEA. What veiled form sits on that ebon throne?

ASIA. The veil has fallen.

PANTHEA.                               I see a mighty darkness  
 Filling the seat of power, and rays of gloom  
 Dart round, as light from the meridian sun,  
 Ungazed upon and shapeless; neither limb,  
 Nor form, nor outline; yet we feel it is  
 A living Spirit.

DEMOGORGON. Ask what thou wouldst know.

ASIA. What canst thou tell?

DEMOGORGON.                               All things thou dar'st demand.

ASIA. Who made the living world?

DEMOGORGON.                               God.

ASIA.   Who made all  
 That it contains? thought, passion, reason, will,  
 Imagination?

DEMOGORGON.                               God: Almighty God.

ASIA. Who made that sense which when the winds of spring  
 In rarest visitation, or the voice  
 Of one beloved heard in youth alone.

Fills the faint eyes with falling tears which dim  
The radiant looks of unbewailing flowers,  
And leaves this peopled earth a solitude  
When it returns no more?

DEMOGORGON.

Merciful God.

ASIA. And who made terror, madness, crime, remorse,  
Which from the links of the great chain of things,  
To every thought within the mind of man  
Sway and drag heavily, and each one reels  
Under the load towards the pit of death;  
Abandoned hope, and love that turns to hate;  
And self-contempt, bitterer to drink than blood;  
Pain, whose unheeded and familiar speech  
Is howling, and keen shrieks, day after day;  
And Hell, or the sharp fear of Hell?

DEMOGORGON.

He reigns.

ASIA. Utter his name: a world pining in pain  
Asks but his name: curses shall drag him down.

DEMOGORGON. He reigns.

ASIA.

I feel, I know it: who?

DEMOGORGON.

He reigns.

ASIA. Who reigns? There was the Heaven and Earth at  
first,

And Light and Love; then Saturn, from whose throne  
Time fell, an envious shadow: such the state  
Of the earth's primal spirits beneath his sway,  
As the calm joy of flowers and living leaves  
Before the wind or sun has withered them  
And semivital worms; but he refused  
The birthright of their being, knowledge, power,  
The skill which wields the elements, the thought  
Which pierces this dim universe like light,  
Self-empire, and the majesty of love;  
For thirst of which they fainted. Then Prometheus  
Gave wisdom, which is strength, to Jupiter,  
And with this law alone, "Let man be free,"  
Clothed him with the dominion of wide Heaven,

To know nor faith, nor love, nor law; to be  
Omnipotent but friendless, is to reign;  
And Jove now reigned; for on the race of man  
First famine, and then toil, and then disease,  
Strife, wounds, and ghastly death unseen before,  
Fell; and the unseasonable seasons drove  
With alternating shafts of frost and fire,  
Their shelterless, pale tribes to mountain caves:  
And in their desert hearts fierce wants he sent,  
And mad disquietudes, and shadows idle  
Of unreal good, which levied mutual war,  
So ruining the lair wherein they raged.  
Prometheus saw, and waked the legioned hopes  
Which sleep within folded Elysian flowers,  
Nepenthe, Moly, Amaranth, fadeless blooms,  
That they might hide with thin and rainbow wings  
The shape of Death; and Love he sent to bind  
The disunited tendrils of that vine  
Which bears the wine of life, the human heart:  
And he tamed fire which, like some beast of prey,  
Most terrible, but lovely, played beneath  
The frown of man; and tortured to his will  
Iron and gold, the slaves and signs of power,  
And gems and poisons, and all subtlest forms  
Hidden beneath the mountains and the waves.  
He gave man speech, and speech created thought,  
Which is the measure of the universe;  
And Science struck the thrones of earth and heaven,  
Which shook, but fell not; and the harmonious mind  
Poured itself forth in all-prophetic song;  
And music lifted up the listening spirit  
Until it walked, exempt from mortal care,  
Godlike, o'er the clear billows of sweet sound;  
And human hands first mimicked and then mocked,  
With moulded limbs more lovely than its own,  
The human form, till marble grew divine;  
And mothers, gazing, drank the love men see

Reflected in their race, behold, and perish.  
 He told the hidden power of herbs and springs,  
 And Disease drank and slept. Death grew like sleep.  
 He taught the implicated orbits woven  
 Of the wide-wandering stars; and how the sun  
 Changes his lair, and by what secret spell  
 The pale moon is transformed, when her broad eye  
 Gazes not on the interlunar sea:  
 He taught to rule, as life directs the limbs,  
 The tempest-wingéd chariots of the Ocean,  
 And the Celt knew the Indian. Cities then  
 Were built, and through their snow-like columns flowed  
 The warm winds, and the azure aether shone,  
 And the blue sea and shadowy hills were seen.  
 Such, the alleviations of his state,  
 Prometheus gave to man, for which he hangs  
 Withering in destined pain: but who rains down  
 Evil, the immedicable plague, which, while  
 Man looks on his creation like a God  
 And sees that it is glorious, drives him on  
 The wreck of his own will, the scorn of earth,  
 The outcast, the abandoned, the alone?  
 Not Jove: while yet his frown shook heaven, ay when  
 His adversary from adamantine chains  
 Cursed him, he trembled like a slave. Declare  
 Who is his master? Is he too a slave?

DEMOGORGON. All spirits are enslaved which serve things  
 evil:

Thou knowest if Jupiter be such or no.

ASIA. Whom called'st thou God?

DEMOGORGON. I spoke but as ye speak,

For Jove is the supreme of living things.

ASIA. Who is the master of the slave?

DEMOGORGON. If the abysm

Could vomit forth its secrets. . . . But a voice

Is wanting, the deep truth is imageless;

For what would it avail to bid thee gaze



On the revolving world? What to bid speak  
 Fate, Time, Occasion, Chance, and Change? To these  
 All things are subject but eternal Love.

ASIA. So much I asked before, and my heart gave  
 The response thou hast given; and of such truths  
 Each to itself must be the oracle.

One more demand; and do thou answer me  
 As mine own soul would answer, did it know  
 That which I ask. Prometheus shall arise  
 Henceforth the sun of this rejoicing world:  
 When shall the destined hour arrive?

DEMOGORGON.

Behold!

ASIA. The rocks are cloven, and through the purple night  
 I see cars drawn by rainbow-wingéd steeds  
 Which trample the dim winds: in each there stands  
 A wild-eyed charioteer urging their flight.  
 Some look behind, as fiends pursued them there.  
 And yet I see no shapes but the keen stars:  
 Others, with burning eyes, lean forth, and drink  
 With eager lips the wind of their own speed,  
 As if the thing they loved fled on before,  
 And now, even now, they clasped it. Their bright locks  
 Stream like a comet's flashing hair: they all  
 Sweep onward.

DEMOGORGON. These are the immortal Hours,  
 Of whom thou didst demand. One waits for thee.

ASIA. A spirit with a dreadful countenance  
 Checks its dark chariot by the craggy gulf.  
 Unlike thy brethren, ghastly charioteer,  
 Who art thou? Whither wouldst thou bear me? Speak!

SPIRIT. I am the shadow of a destiny  
 More dread than is my aspect: ere yon planet  
 Has set, the darkness which ascends with me  
 Shall wrap in lasting night heaven's kingless throne.

ASIA. What meanest thou?

PANTHEA. That terrible shadow floats  
 Up from its throne, as may the lurid smoke



Of earthquake-ruined cities o'er the sea.  
 Lo! it ascends the car; the coursers fly  
 Terrified: watch its path among the stars  
 Blackening the night!

ASIA.                                Thus I am answered; strange!

PANTHEA. See, near the verge, another chariot stays;  
 An ivory shell inlaid with crimson fire,  
 Which comes and goes within its sculptured rim  
 Of delicate strange tracery; the young spirit  
 That guides it has the dove-like eyes of hope;  
 How its soft smiles attract the soul! as light  
 Lures wingéd insects through the lampless air.

#### SPIRIT

My coursers are fed with the lightning,  
 They drink of the whirlwind's stream,  
 And when the red morning is bright'ning  
 They bathe in the fresh sunbeam;  
 They have strength for their swiftmess  
       I deem,  
 Then ascend with me, daughter of Ocean.

I desire; and their speed makes night kindle;  
 I fear: they outstrip the Typhoon;  
 Ere the cloud piled on Atlas can dwindle  
 We encircle the earth and the moon:  
 We shall rest from long labors at noon:  
 Then ascend with me, daughter of Ocean.

SCENE V—*The Car Pauses Within a Cloud on the Top of a Snowy Mountain.*

[ASIA, PANTHEA and the SPIRIT OF THE HOUR.]

#### SPIRIT

On the brink of the night and the morning  
 My coursers are wont to respire;

But the Earth has just whispered a warning  
That their flight must be swifter than fire:  
They shall drink the hot speed of desire!

ASIA. Thou breathest on their nostrils, but my breath  
Would give them swifter speed.

SPIRIT. Alas! it could not.

PANTHEA. Oh Spirit! pause, and tell whence is the light  
Which fills the cloud? the sun is yet unrisen.

SPIRIT. The sun will rise not until noon. Apollo  
Is held in heaven by wonder; and the light  
Which fills this vapor, as the aërial hue  
Of fountain-gazing roses fills the water,  
Flows from thy mighty sister.

PANTHEA. Yes, I feel—

ASIA. What is it with thee, sister? Thou art pale.

PANTHEA. How thou art changed! I dare not look on thee;  
I feel but see thee not. I scarce endure  
The radiance of thy beauty. Some good change  
Is working in the elements, which suffer  
Thy presence thus unveiled. The Nereids tell  
That on the day when the clear hyaline  
Was cloven at thy uprise, and thou didst stand  
Within a veined shell, which floated on  
Over the calm floor of the crystal sea,  
Among the Ægean isles, and by the shores  
Which bear thy name: love, like the atmosphere  
Of the sun's fire filling the living world,  
Burst from thee, and illumined earth and heaven  
And the deep ocean and the sunless caves  
And all that dwells within them; till grief cast  
Eclipse upon the soul from which it came:  
Such art thou now; nor is it I alone.  
Thy sister, thy companion, thine own chosen one.  
But the whole world which seeks thy sympathy.  
Hearest thou not sounds i' the air which speak the love  
Of all articulate beings? Feelest thou not  
The inanimate winds enamored of thee? List! [*Music.*]

ASIA. Thy words are sweeter than aught else but his  
Whose echoes they are: yet all love is sweet,  
Given or returned. Common as light is love,  
And its familiar voice wearies not ever.  
Like the wide heaven, the all-sustaining air,  
It makes the reptile equal to the God:  
They who inspire it most are fortunate,  
As I am now; but those who feel it most  
Are happier still, after long sufferings,  
As I shall soon become.

PANTHEA.

List! Spirits speak.

VOICE IN THE AIR SINGING

Life of Life! thy lips enkindle  
With their love the breath between them;  
And thy smiles before they dwindle  
Make the cold air fire; then screen them  
In those looks, where whoso gazes  
Faints, entangled in their mazes.

Child of Light! thy limbs are burning  
Thro' the vest which seems to hide them;  
As the radiant lines of morning  
Thro' the clouds ere they divide them;  
And this atmosphere divinest  
Shrouds thee wheresoe'er thou shinest.

Fair are others; none beholds thee,  
But thy voice sounds low and tender  
Like the fairest, for it folds thee  
From the sight, that liquid splendor,  
And all feel, yet see thee never,  
As I feel now, lost for ever!

Lamp of Earth! where'er thou movest  
Its dim shapes are clad with brightness,

And the souls of whom thou lovest  
Walk upon the winds with lightness,  
Till they fail, as I am failing,  
Dizzy, lost, yet unbewailing!

## ASIA

My soul is an enchanted boat,  
Which, like a sleeping swan, doth float  
Upon the silver waves of thy sweet singing;  
And thine doth like an angel sit  
Beside a helm conducting it,  
Whilst all the winds with melody are ringing.  
It seems to float ever, for ever,  
Upon that many-winding river,  
Between mountains, woods, abysses,  
A paradise of wildernesses!  
Till, like one in slumber bound,  
Borne to the ocean, I float down, around,  
Into a sea profound, of ever-spreading sound:

Meanwhile thy spirit lifts its pinions  
In music's most serene dominions;  
Catching the winds that fan that happy heaven.  
And we sail on, away, afar,  
Without a course, without a star,  
But, by the instinct of sweet music driven;  
Till through Elysian garden islets  
By thee, most beautiful of pilots,  
Where never mortal pinnacle glided,  
The boat of my desire is guided:  
Realms where the air we breathe is love,  
Which in the winds and on the waves doth move,  
Harmonizing this earth with what we feel above.

We have pass'd Age's icy caves,  
And Manhood's dark and tossing waves,  
And Youth's smooth ocean, smiling to betray:  
Beyond the glassy gulfs we flee  
Of shadow-peopled Infancy,  
Through Death and Birth, to a diviner day:  
A paradise of vaulted bowers,  
Lit by downward-gazing flowers,  
And watery paths that wind between  
Wildernesses calm and green,  
Peopled by shapes too bright to see,  
And rest, having beheld; somewhat like thee:  
Which walk upon the sea, and chant melodiously!

## ACT III

SCENE I—HEAVEN. JUPITER *on his Throne*; THETIS and the other Deities assembled.

JUPITER. Ye congregated powers of heaven, who share  
The glory and the strength of him ye serve,  
Rejoice! henceforth I am omnipotent.  
All else had been subdued to me; alone  
The soul of man, like unextinguished fire,  
Yet burns toward heaven with fierce reproach, and doubt,  
And lamentation, and reluctant prayer,  
Hurling up insurrection, which might make  
Our antique empire insecure, though built  
On eldest faith, and hell's coeval, fear;  
And tho' my curses thro' the pendulous air,  
Like snow on herbless peaks, fall flake by flake,  
And cling to it; tho' under my wrath's night  
It climbs the crags of life, step after step,  
Which wound it, as ice wounds unsandalled feet,

It yet remains supreme o'er misery,  
Aspiring, unrepressed, yet soon to fall:  
Even now have I begotten a strange wonder,  
That fatal child, the terror of the earth,  
Who waits but till the destined hour arrive,  
Bearing from Demogorgon's vacant throne  
The dreadful might of ever-living limbs  
Which clothed that awful spirit unbeheld,  
To redescend, and trample out the spark.  
Pour forth heaven's wine, Idæan Ganymede,  
And let it fill the Dædal cups like fire,  
And from the flower-inwoven soil divine  
Ye all-triumphant harmonies arise,  
As dew from earth under the twilight stars:  
Drink! be the nectar circling thro' your veins  
The soul of joy, ye ever-living Gods,  
Till exultation burst in one wide voice  
Like music from Elysian winds.

And thou  
Ascend beside me, veiled in the light  
Of the desire which makes thee one with me,  
Thetis, bright image of eternity!  
When thou didst cry, "Insufferable night!  
God! Spare me! I sustain not the quick flames,  
The penetrating presence; all my being,  
Like him whom the Numidian seps did thaw  
Into a dew with poison, is dissolved,  
Sinking thro' its foundations;" even then  
Two mighty spirits, mingling, made a third  
Mightier than either, which, unbodied now,  
Between us floats, felt, although unbeheld,  
Waiting the incarnation, which ascends,  
(Hear ye the thunder of the fiery wheels  
Grinding the winds?) from Demogorgon's throne.  
Victory! victory! Feel'st thou not, O world,  
The earthquake of his chariot thundering up  
Olympus?

[*The Car of the HOUR arrives.  
DEMOGORGON descends, and moves  
towards the Throne of JUPITER.*]

Awful shape, what art thou?

Speak!

DEMOGORGON. Eternity. Demand no direr name.  
Descend, and follow me down the abyss.  
I am thy child, as thou wert Saturn's child;  
Mightier than thee: and we must dwell together  
Henceforth in darkness. Lift thy lightnings not.  
The tyranny of heaven none may retain,  
Or reassume, or hold, succeeding thee:  
Yet if thou wilt, as 'tis the destiny  
Of trodden worms to writhe till they are dead,  
Put forth thy might.

JUPITER. Detested prodigy!  
Even thus beneath the deep Titanian prisons  
I trample thee! thou lingerest?

Mercy! mercy!

No pity, no release, no respite! Oh,  
That thou wouldst make mine enemy my judge,  
Even where he hangs, seared by my long revenge,  
On Caucasus! he would not doom me thus.  
Gentle, and just, and dreadless, is he not  
The monarch of the world? What then art thou?  
No refuge! no appeal!

Sink with me then,

We too will sink on the wide waves of ruin,  
Even as a vulture and a snake outspent  
Drop, twisted in inextricable fight,  
Into a shoreless sea. Let hell unlock  
Its mounded oceans of tempestuous fire,  
And whelm on them into the bottomless void  
This desolated world, and thee, and me,  
The conqueror and the conquered, and the wreck  
Of that for which they combated.



Ai! Ai!

The elements obey me not. I sink  
Dizzily down, ever, for ever, down.  
And, like a cloud, mine enemy above  
Darkens my fall with victory! Ai, Ai!

SCENE II—*The Mouth of a Great River in the Island Atlantis.* OCEAN is discovered reclining near the Shore; APOLLO stands beside him.

OCEAN. He fell, thou sayest, beneath his conqueror's frown?

APOLLO. Aye, when the strife was ended which made dim  
The orb I rule, and shook the solid stars,  
The terrors of his eye illumined heaven  
With sanguine light, through the thick ragged skirts  
Of the victorious darkness, as he fell:  
Like the last glare of day's red agony,  
Which, from a rent among the fiery clouds,  
Burns far along the tempest-wrinkled deep.

OCEAN. He sunk to the abyss? To the dark void?

APOLLO. An eagle so caught in some bursting cloud  
On Caucasus, his thunder-baffled wings  
Entangled in the whirlwind, and his eyes  
Which gazed on the undazzling sun, now blinded  
By the white lightning, while the ponderous hail  
Beats on his struggling form, which sinks at length  
Prone, and the ærial ice clings over it.

OCEAN. Henceforth the fields of Heaven-reflecting sea  
Which are my realm, will heave, unstained with blood,  
Beneath the uplifting winds, like plains of corn  
Swayed by the summer air; my streams will flow  
Round many-peopled continents, and round  
Fortunate isles; and from their glassy thrones  
Blue Proteus and his humid nymphs shall mark  
The shadow of fair ships, as mortals see  
The floating bark of the light-laden moon  
With that white star, its sightless pilot's crest,

Borne down the rapid sunset's ebbing sea;  
 Tracking their path no more by blood and groans,  
 And desolation, and the mingled voice  
 Of slavery and command! but by the light  
 Of wave-reflected flowers, and floating odors,  
 And music soft, and mild, free, gentle voices,  
 And sweetest music, such as spirits love.

APOLLO. And I shall gaze not on the deeds which make  
 My mind obscure with sorrow, as eclipse  
 Darkens the sphere I guide; but list, I hear  
 The small, clear, silver lute of the young Spirit  
 That sits i' the morning star.

OCEAN.                               Thou must away;  
 Thy steeds will pause at even, till when farewell:  
 The loud deep calls me home even now to feed it  
 With azure calm out of the emerald urns  
 Which stand for ever full beside my throne.  
 Behold the Nereids under the green sea,  
 Their wavering limbs borne on the windlike stream,  
 Their white arms lifted o'er their streaming hair  
 With garlands pied and starry sea-flower crowns,  
 Hastening to grace their mighty sister's joy.

[*A sound of waves is heard.*]

It is the unpastured sea hungering for calm.  
 Peace, monster; I come now. Farewell.

APOLLO.                               Farewell.

SCENE III—CAUCASUS. PROMETHEUS, HERCULES, IONE, *the*  
 EARTH, SPIRITS, ASIA, and PANTHEA, *borne in the Car with the*  
 SPIRIT OF THE HOUR. HERCULES *unbinds* PROMETHEUS, *who*  
*descends.*

HERCULES. Most glorious among spirits, thus doth strength  
 To wisdom, courage, and long-suffering love,  
 And thee, who art the form they animate,



From difference sweet where discord cannot be;  
And hither come, sped on the charmèd winds,  
Which meet from all the points of heaven, as bees  
From every flower aërial Enna feeds,  
At their known island-homes in Himera,  
The echoes of the human world, which tell  
Of the low voice of love, almost unheard,  
And dove-eyed pity's murmured pain, and music,  
Itself the echo of the heart, and all  
That tempers or improves man's life, now free;  
And lovely apparitions, dim at first,  
Then radiant, as the mind, arising bright  
From the embrace of beauty, whence the forms  
Of which these are the phantoms, cast on them  
The gathered rays which are reality,  
Shall visit us, the progeny immortal  
Of Painting, Sculpture, and rapt Poesy,  
And arts, tho' unimagined, yet to be.  
The wandering voices and the shadows these  
Of all that man becomes, the mediators  
Of that best worship love, by him and us  
Given and returned; swift shapes and sounds, which grow  
More fair and soft as man grows wise and kind,  
And, veil by veil, evil and error fall:  
Such virtue has the cave and place around.

[*Turning to the Spirit of the Hour.*]

For thee, fair Spirit, one toil remains. Ione,  
Give her that curvèd shell, which Proteus old  
Made Asia's nuptial boon, breathing within it  
A voice to be accomplished, and which thou  
Didst hide in grass under the hollow rock.

IONE. Thou most desired Hour, more loved and lovely  
Than all thy sisters, this is the mystic shell;  
See the pale azure fading into silver  
Lining it with a soft yet glowing light:

Looks it not like lulled music sleeping there?

SPIRIT. It seems in truth the fairest shell of Ocean:  
Its sounds must be at once both sweet and strange.

PROMETHEUS. Go, borne over the cities of mankind  
On whirlwind-footed coursers: once again  
Outspeed the sun around the orbéd world;  
And as thy chariot cleaves the kindling air,  
Thou breathe into the many-folded shell,  
Loosening its mighty music; it shall be  
As thunder mingled with clear echoes: then  
Return; and thou shalt dwell beside our cave.  
And thou, O, Mother Earth!—

THE EARTH. I hear, I feel;  
Thy lips are on me, and thy touch runs down  
Even to the adamantine central gloom  
Along these marble nerves; 'tis life, 'tis joy,  
And through my withered, old and icy frame  
The warmth of an immortal youth shoots down  
Circling. Henceforth the many children fair  
Folded in my sustaining arms; all plants,  
And creeping forms, and insects rainbow-winged,  
And birds, and beasts, and fish, and human shapes,  
Which drew disease and pain from my wan bosom,  
Draining the poison of despair, shall take  
And interchange sweet nutriment; to me  
Shall they become like sister antelopes  
By one fair dam, snow-white and swift as wind,  
Nursed among lilies near a brimming stream.  
The dew-mists of my sunless sleep shall float  
Under the stars like balm: night-folded flowers  
Shall suck unwithering hues in their repose:  
And men and beasts in happy dreams shall gather  
Strength for the coming day, and all its joy:  
And death shall be the last embrace of her  
Who takes the life she gave, even as a mother  
Folding her child, says, "Leave me not again."

ASIA. Oh, mother! wherefore speak the name of death?

Cease they to love, and move, and breathe, and speak,  
Who die?

THE EARTH. It would avail not to reply:  
Thou art immortal, and this tongue is known  
But to the uncommunicating dead.  
Death is the veil which those who live call life:  
They sleep, and it is lifted: and meanwhile  
In mild variety the seasons mild  
With rainbow-skirted showers, and odorous winds,  
And long blue meteors cleansing the dull night,  
And the life-kindling shafts of the keen sun's  
All-piercing bow, and the dew-mingled rain  
Of the calm moonbeams, a soft influence mild,  
Shall clothe the forests and the fields, ay, even  
The crag-built deserts of the barren deep,  
With ever-living leaves, and fruits, and flowers.  
And thou! There is a cavern where my spirit  
Was panted forth in anguish whilst thy pain  
Made my heart mad, and those who did inhale it  
Became mad too, and built a temple there,  
And spoke, and were oracular, and lured  
The erring nations round to mutual war,  
And faithless faith, such as Jove kept with thee;  
Which breath now rises, as amongst tall weeds  
A violet's exhalation, and it fills  
With a serener light and crimson air  
Intense, yet soft, the rocks and woods around;  
It feeds the quick growth of the serpent vine,  
And the dark linkèd ivy tangling wild,  
And budding, blown, or odor-faded blooms  
Which star the winds with points of colored light,  
As they rain thro' them, and bright golden globes  
Of fruit, suspended in their own green heaven,  
And thro' their veinèd leaves and amber stems  
The flowers whose purple and translucent bowls  
Stand ever mantling with aërial dew,  
The drink of spirits: and it circles round,



Like the soft waving wings of noonday dreams,  
Inspiring calm and happy thoughts, like mine,  
Now thou art thus restored. This cave is thine.  
Arise! Appear!

[*A Spirit rises in the likeness of a winged child.*]

This is my torch-bearer;

Who let his lamp out in old time with gazing  
On eyes from which he kindled it anew  
With love, which is as fire, sweet daughter mine,  
For such is that within thine own. Run, wayward,  
And guide this company beyond the peak  
Of Bacchic Nysa, Mænad-haunted mountain,  
And beyond Indus and its tribute rivers,  
Trampling the torrent streams and glassy lakes  
With feet unwet, unwearied, undelaying,  
And up the green ravine, across the vale,  
Beside the windless and crystalline pool,  
Where ever lies, on unerasing waves,  
The image of a temple, built above,  
Distinct with column, arch, and architrave,  
And palm-like capital, and over-wrought  
And populous most with living imagery,  
Praxitelean shapes, whose marble smiles  
Fill the hushed air with everlasting love.  
It is deserted now, but once it bore  
Thy name, Prometheus; there the emulous youths  
Bore to thy honor thro' the divine gloom  
The lamp which was thine emblem; even as those  
Who bear the untransmitted torch of hope  
Into the grave, across the night of life,  
As thou hast borne it most triumphantly  
To this far goal of Time. Depart, farewell.  
Beside that temple is the destined cave.



SCENE IV—*A Forest. In the Background a Cave, PROMETHEUS, ASIA, PANTHEA, IONE, and the SPIRIT OF THE EARTH.*

IONE. Sister, it is not earthly: how it glides  
Under the leaves! how on its head there burns  
A light, like a green star, whose emerald beams  
Are twined with its fair hair! how, as it moves,  
The splendor drops in flakes upon the grass!  
Knowest thou it?

PANTHEA. It is the delicate spirit  
That guides the earth thro' heaven. From afar  
The populous constellations call that light  
The loveliest of the planets; and sometimes  
It floats along the spray of the salt sea,  
Or makes its chariot of a foggy cloud,  
Or walks thro' fields or cities while men sleep,  
Or o'er the mountain tops, or down the rivers,  
Or thro' the green waste wilderness, as now,  
Wondering at all it sees. Before Jove reigned  
It loved our sister Asia, and it came  
Each leisure hour to drink the liquid light  
Out of her eyes, for which it said it thirsted  
As one bit by a dipsas, and with her  
It made its childish confidence, and told her  
All it had known or seen, for it saw much,  
Yet idly reasoned what it saw; and called her—  
For whence it sprung it knew not, nor do I—  
Mother, dear Mother.

THE SPIRIT OF THE EARTH [*running to Asia*].

Mother, dearest mother;

May I then talk with thee as I was wont?  
May I then hide my eyes in thy soft arms,  
After thy looks have made them tired of joy?  
May I then play beside thee the long noons,

When work is none in the bright silent air?

ASIA. I love thee, gentlest being, and henceforth  
Can cherish thee unenvied: speak, I pray:  
Thy simple talk once solaced, now delights.

SPIRIT OF THE EARTH. Mother, I am grown wiser, though a  
child

Cannot be wise like thee, within this day;  
And happier too; happier and wiser both.  
Thou knowest that toads, and snakes, and loathly worms,  
And venomous and malicious beasts, and boughs  
That bore ill berries in the woods, were ever  
An hindrance to my walks o'er the green world:  
And that, among the haunts of human-kind,  
Hard-featured men, or with proud, angry looks,  
Or cold, staid gait, or false and hollow smiles,  
Or the dull sneer of self-loved ignorance,  
Or other such foul masks, with which ill thoughts  
Hide that fair being whom we spirits call man;  
And women too, ugliest of all things evil,  
(Tho' fair, even in a world where thou art fair,  
When good and kind, free and sincere like thee),  
When false or frowning made me sick at heart  
To pass them, tho' they slept, and I unseen,  
Well, my path lately lay thro' a great city  
Into the woody hills surrounding it:  
A sentinel was sleeping at the gate:  
When there was heard a sound, so loud it shook  
The towers amid the moonlight, yet more sweet  
Than any voice but thine, sweetest of all;  
A long, long sound, as it would never end:  
And all the inhabitants leapt suddenly  
Out of their rest, and gathered in the streets,  
Looking in wonder up to Heaven, while yet  
The music pealed along. I hid myself  
Within a fountain in the public square,  
Where I lay like the reflex of the moon  
Seen in a wave under green leaves; and soon

Those ugly human shapes and visages  
 Of which I spoke as having wrought me pain,  
 Passed floating thro' the air, and fading still  
 Into the winds that scattered them; and those  
 From whom they passed seemed mild and lovely forms  
 After some foul disguise had fallen, and all  
 Were somewhat changed, and after brief surprise  
 And greetings of delighted wonder, all  
 Went to their sleep again: and when the dawn  
 Came, would'st thou think that toads, and snakes, and  
 efts,

Could e'er be beautiful? yet so they were,  
 And that with little change of shape or hue:  
 All things had put their evil nature off;  
 I cannot tell my joy, when o'er a lake  
 Upon a drooping bough with night-shade twined,  
 I saw two azure halcyons clinging downward  
 And thinning one bright bunch of amber berries,  
 With quick long beaks, and in the deep there lay  
 Those lovely forms imaged as in a sky;  
 So, with my thoughts full of these happy changes,  
 We meet again, the happiest change of all.

ASIA. And never will we part, till thy chaste sister  
 Who guides the frozen and inconstant moon  
 Will look on thy more warm and equal light  
 Till her heart thaw like flakes of April snow  
 And love thee.

SPIRIT OF THE EARTH.

What; as Asia loves

Prometheus?

ASIA. Peace, wanton, thou art yet not old enough.  
 Think ye by gazing on each other's eyes  
 To multiply your lovely selves, and fill  
 With spheréd fires the interlunar air?

SPIRIT OF THE EARTH. Nay, mother, while my sister trims  
 her lamp

'Tis hard I should go darkling.

ASIA. Listen; look!

[*The SPIRIT OF THE HOUR enters.*]

PROMETHEUS. We feel what thou hast heard and seen; yet speak.

SPIRIT OF THE HOUR. Soon as the sound had ceased whose thunder filled

The abysses of the sky and the wide earth,  
There was a change: the impalpable thin air  
And the all-circling sunlight were transformed;  
As if the sense of love dissolved in them  
Had folded itself round the spheréd world.  
My vision then grew clear, and I could see  
Into the mysteries of the universe:  
Dizzy as with delight I floated down;  
Winnowing the lightsome air with languid plumes,  
My coursers sought their birthplace in the sun,  
Where they henceforth will live exempt from toil  
Pasturing flowers of vegetable fire;  
And where my moonlike car will stand within  
A temple, gazed upon by Phidian forms  
Of thee, and Asia, and the Earth, and me,  
And you fair nymphs looking the love we feel,—  
In memory of the tidings it has borne,—  
Beneath a dome fretted with graven flowers,  
Poised on twelve columns of resplendent stone,  
And open to the bright and liquid sky.  
Yoked to it by an amphisbenic snake  
The likeness of those winged steeds will mock  
The flight from which they find repose. Alas,  
Whither has wandered now my partial tongue  
When all remains untold which ye would hear?  
As I have said I floated to the earth:  
It was, as it is still, the pain of bliss  
To move, to breathe, to be; I wandering went  
Among the haunts and dwellings of mankind,  
And first was disappointed not to see  
Such mighty change as I had felt within

Expressed in outward things; but soon I looked,  
And behold, thrones were kingless, and men walked  
One with the other even as spirits do,  
None fawned, none trampled; hate, disdain, or fear,  
Self-love or self-contempt, on human brows,  
No more inscribed, as o'er the gate of hell,  
"All hope abandon ye who enter here;"  
None frowned, none trembled, none with eager fear  
Gazed on another's eye of cold command,  
Until the subject of the tyrant's will  
Became, worse fate, the abject of his own,  
Which spurred him, like an outspent horse, to death.  
None wrought his lips in truth-entangling lines  
Which smiled the lie his tongue disdained to speak;  
None, with firm sneer, trod out in his own heart  
The sparks of love and hope till there remained  
Those bitter ashes, a soul self-consumed,  
And the wretch crept a vampire among men,  
Infecting all with his own hideous ill;  
None talked that common, false, cold, hollow talk  
Which makes the heart deny the *yes* it breathes,  
Yet question that unmeant hypocrisy  
With such a self-mistrust as has no name.  
And women, too, frank, beautiful, and kind  
As the free heaven which rains fresh light and dew  
On the wide earth, passed; gentle radiant forms,  
From custom's evil taint exempt and pure;  
Speaking the wisdom once they could not think,  
Looking emotions once they feared to feel,  
And changed to all which once they dared not be,  
Yet being now, made earth like heaven; nor pride,  
Nor jealousy, nor envy, nor ill shame,  
The bitterest of those drops of treasured gall,  
Spoilt the sweet taste of the nepenthe, love.

Thrones, altars, judgment-seats, and prisons, wherein,  
And beside which, by wretched men were borne

Sceptres, tiaras, swords, and chains, and tomes  
Of reasoned wrong, glozed on by ignorance,  
Were like those monstrous and barbaric shapes,  
The ghosts of a no more remembered fame,  
Which, from their unworn obelisks, look forth  
In triumph o'er the palaces and tombs  
Of those who were their conquerors: mouldering round  
Those imaged to the pride of kings and priests,  
A dark yet mighty faith, a power as wide  
As is the world it wasted, and are now  
But an astonishment; even so the tools  
And emblems of its last captivity,  
Amid the dwellings of the peopled earth,  
Stand, not o'erthrown, but unregarded now.  
And those foul shapes, abhorred by god and man,  
Which, under many a name and many a form,  
Strange, savage, ghastly, dark and execrable,  
Were Jupiter, the tyrant of the world;  
And which the nations, panic-stricken, served  
With blood, and hearts broken by long hope, and love  
Dragged to his altars soiled and garlandless,  
And slain among men's unreclaiming tears,  
Flattering the thing they feared, which fear was hate,  
Frown, mouldering fast, o'er their abandoned shrines:  
The painted veil, by those who were, called life,  
Which mimicked, as with colors idly spread,  
All men believed and hoped, is torn aside;  
The loathsome mask has fallen, the man remains  
Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, but man  
Equal, unclassed, tribeless, and nationless,  
Exempt from awe, worship, degree, the king  
Over himself; just, gentle, wise: but man  
Passionless?—no, yet free from guilt or pain,  
Which were, for his will made or suffered them,  
Nor yet exempt, tho' ruling them like slaves,  
From chance, and death, and mutability,  
The clogs of that which else might oversoar

The loftiest star of unascended heaven,  
Pinnacled dim in the intense inane.

## ACT IV

SCENE, *A Part of the Forest near the Cave of PROMETHEUS.*  
*PANTHEA and IONE are sleeping: they awaken gradually during the first Song.*

## VOICE OF UNSEEN SPIRITS

The pale stars are gone!  
For the sun, their swift shepherd,  
To their folds them compelling,  
In the depths of the dawn,  
Hastes, in meteor-eclipsing array, and they flee  
Beyond his blue dwelling,  
As fawns flee the leopard.  
But where are ye?

A TRAIN OF DARK FORMS AND SHADOWS PASSES BY  
CONFUSEDLY, SINGING

Here, oh, here:  
We bear the bier  
Of the Father of many a cancelled year!  
Spectres we  
Of the dead Hours be,  
We bear Time to his tomb in eternity.

Strew, oh, strew  
Hair, not yew!  
Wet the dusty pall with tears, not dew!  
Be the faded flowers  
Of Death's bare bowers  
Spread on the corpse of the King of Hours!



Haste, oh, haste!  
 As shades are chased,  
 Trembling, by day, from heaven's blue waste.  
 We melt away,  
 Like dissolving spray,  
 From the children of a diviner day,  
 With the lullaby  
 Of winds that die  
 On the bosom of their own harmony!

IONE

What dark forms were they?

PANTHEA

The past Hours weak and gray,  
 With the spoil which their toil  
     Raked together  
 From the conquest but One could foil.

IONE

Have they past?

PANTHEA

                    They have past;  
 They outspeeded the blast,  
 While 'tis said, they are fled:

IONE

Whither, oh, whither?

PANTHEA

To the dark, to the past, to the dead.

## VOICE OF UNSEEN SPIRITS

Bright clouds float in heaven,  
Dew-stars gleam on earth,  
Waves assemble on ocean,  
They are gathered and driven  
By the storm of delight, by the panic of glee!  
They shake with emotion,  
They dance in their mirth.  
But where are ye?

The pine boughs are singing  
Old songs with new gladness,  
The billows and fountains  
Fresh music are flinging,  
Like the notes of a spirit from land and from sea;  
The storms mock the mountains  
With the thunder of gladness.  
But where are ye?

IONE. What charioteers are these?

PANTHEA.

Where are their chariots?

## SEMICHORUS OF HOURS

The voice of the Spirits of Air and of Earth  
Have drawn back the figured curtain of sleep  
Which covered our being and darkened our birth  
In the deep.

## A VOICE

In the deep?

## SEMICHORUS II

Oh, below the deep.

## SEMICHORUS. I

An hundred ages we had been kept  
 Cradled in visions of hate and care,  
 And each one who waked as his brother slept,  
 Found the truth—

## SEMICHORUS II

Worse than his visions were!

## SEMICHORUS I

We have heard the lute of Hope in sleep;  
 We have known the voice of Love in dreams,  
 We have felt the wand of Power, and leap—

## SEMICHORUS II

As the billows leap in the morning beams!

## CHORUS

Weave the dance on the floor of the breeze,  
 Pierce with song heaven's silent light,  
 Enchant the day that too swiftly flees,  
 To check its flight ere the cave of night.

Once the hungry Hours were hounds  
 Which chased the day like a bleeding deer,  
 And it limped and stumbled with many wounds  
 Through the nightly dells of the desert year.

But now, oh weave the mystic measure  
 Of music, and dance, and shapes of light,  
 Let the Hours, and the spirits of might and pleasure,  
 Like the clouds and sunbeams, unite.

## A VOICE

Unite!

PANTHEA. See where the Spirits of the human mind  
Wrapt in sweet sounds, as in bright veils, approach.

## CHORUS OF SPIRITS

We join the throng  
Of the dance and the song,  
By the whirlwind of gladness borne along;  
As the flying-fish leap  
From the Indian deep,  
And mix with the sea-birds, half asleep.

## CHORUS OF HOURS

Whence come ye, so wild and so fleet,  
For sandals of lightning are on your feet,  
And your wings are soft and swift as thought,  
And your eyes are as love which is veiled not?

## CHORUS OF SPIRITS

We come from the mind  
Of human kind  
Which was late so dusk, and obscene, and blind,  
Now 'tis an ocean  
Of clear emotion,  
A heaven of serene and mighty motion;

From that deep abyss  
Of wonder and bliss,  
Whose caverns are crystal palaces;  
From those skiey towers  
Where Thought's crowned powers  
Sit watching your dance, ye happy Hours!

From the dim recesses  
Of woven caresses,  
Where lovers catch ye by your loose tresses;  
From the azure isles,  
Where sweet Wisdom smiles,  
Delaying your ships with her siren wiles.

From the temples high  
Of Man's ear and eye,  
Roofed over Sculpture and Poesy;  
From the murmurings  
Of the unsealed springs  
Where Science bedews his Dædal wings.

Years after years,  
Through blood, and tears,  
And a thick hell of hatreds, and hopes, and fears;  
We waded and flew,  
And the islets were few  
Where the bud-blighted flowers of happiness grew.

Our feet now, every palm,  
Are sandalled with calm,  
And the dew of our wings is a rain of balm;  
And, beyond our eyes,  
The human love lies  
Which makes all it gazes on Paradise.

#### CHORUS OF SPIRITS AND HOURS

Then weave the web of the mystic measure;  
From the depths of the sky and the ends of the earth,  
Come, swift Spirits of might and of pleasure,  
Fill the dance and the music of mirth.  
As the waves of a thousand streams rush by  
To an ocean of splendor and harmony!

## CHORUS OF SPIRITS

Our spoil is won,  
Our task is done,  
We are free to dive, or soar, or run;  
Beyond and around,  
Or within the bound  
Which clips the world with darkness round.

We'll pass the eyes  
Of the starry skies  
Into the hoar deep to colonise:  
Death, Chaos, and Night,  
From the sound of our flight,  
Shall flee, like mist from a tempest's might.

And Earth, Air, and Light,  
And the Spirit of Might,  
Which drives round the stars in their fiery flight;  
And Love, Thought, and Breath,  
The powers that quell Death,  
Wherever we soar shall assemble beneath.

And our singing shall build  
In the void's loose field  
A world for the Spirit of Wisdom to wield:  
We will take our plan  
From the new world of man,  
And our work shall be called the Promethean.

## CHORUS OF HOURS

Break the dance, and scatter the song;  
Let some depart, and some remain.

## SEMICHORUS I

We, beyond heaven, are driven along!

## SEMICHORUS II

Us the enchantments of earth retain:

## SEMICHORUS I

Ceaseless, and rapid, and fierce, and free,  
With the Spirits which build a new earth and sea,  
And a heaven where yet heaven could never be.

## SEMICHORUS II

Solemn, and slow, and serene, and bright,  
Leading the Day and outspeeding the Night,  
With the powers of a world of perfect light.

## SEMICHORUS I

We whirl, singing loud, round the gathering sphere,  
Till the trees, and the beasts, and the clouds appear  
From its chaos made calm by love, not fear.

## SEMICHORUS II

We encircle the ocean and mountains of earth,  
And the happy forms of its death and birth  
Change to the music of our sweet mirth.

## CHORUS OF HOURS AND SPIRITS

Break the dance, and scatter the song,  
Let some depart, and some remain,  
Wherever we fly we lead along  
In leashes, like starbeams, soft yet strong.  
The clouds that are heavy with love's sweet rain.

PANTHEA. Ha! they are gone!

IONE.

Yet feel you no delight



From the past sweetness?

PANTHEA. As the bare green hill  
When some soft cloud vanishes into rain,  
Laughs with a thousand drops of sunny water  
To the unpavilioned sky!

IONE. Even whilst we speak  
New notes arise. What is that awful sound?

PANTHEA. 'Tis the deep music of the rolling world  
Kindling within the strings of the waved air,  
Æolian modulations.

IONE. Listen too,  
How every pause is filled with under notes,  
Clear, silver, icy, keen, awakening tones,  
Which pierce the sense, and live within the soul,  
As the sharp stars pierce winter's crystal air  
And gaze upon themselves within the sea.

PANTHEA. But see where through two openings in the forest  
Which hanging branches overcanopy,  
And where two runnels of a rivulet,  
Between the close moss violet-inwoven,  
Have made their path of melody, like sisters  
Who part with sighs that they may meet in smiles,  
Turning their dear disunion to an isle  
Of lovely grief, a wood of sweet sad thoughts;  
Two visions of strange radiance float upon  
The ocean-like enchantment of strong sound,  
Which flows intenser, keener, deeper yet  
Under the ground and through the windless air.

IONE. I see a chariot like that thinnest boat,  
In which the mother of the months is borne  
By ebbing night into her western cave,  
When she upsprings from interlunar dreams,  
O'er which is curved an orblike canopy  
Of gentle darkness, and the hills and woods  
Distinctly seen through that dusk airy veil,  
Regard like shapes in an enchanter's glass;  
Its wheels are solid clouds, azure and gold,

Such as the genii of the thunderstorm  
Pile on the floor of the illumined sea  
When the sun rushes under it; they roll  
And move and grow as with an inward wind;  
Within it sits a wingéd infant, white  
Its countenance, like the whiteness of bright snow,  
Its plumes are as feathers of sunny frost,  
Its limbs gleam white, through the wind flowing folds  
Of its white robe, woof of ethereal pearl.  
Its hair is white, the brightness of white light  
Scattered in strings; yet its two eyes are heavens  
Of liquid darkness, which the Deity  
Within seems pouring, as a storm is poured  
From jagged clouds, out of their arrowy lashes,  
Tempering the cold and radiant air around,  
With fire that is not brightness: in its hand  
It sways a quivering moonbeam, from whose point  
A guiding power directs the chariot's prow  
Over its wheeléd clouds, which as they roll  
Over the grass, and flowers, and waves, wake sounds,  
Sweet as a singing rain of silver dew.

PANTHEA. And from the other opening in the wood  
Rushes, with loud and whirlwind harmony,  
A sphere, which is as many thousand spheres,  
Solid as crystal, yet through all its mass  
Flow, as through empty space, music and light:  
Ten thousand orbs involving and involved,  
Purple and azure, white, and green, and golden,  
Sphere within sphere; and every space between  
Peopled with unimaginable shapes,  
Such as ghosts dream dwell in the lampless deep,  
Yet each inter-transpicious, and they whirl  
Over each other with a thousand motions,  
Upon a thousand sightless axles spinning,  
And with the force of self-destroying swiftness,  
Intensely, slowly, solemnly roll on,  
Kindling with mingled sounds, and many tones,

Intelligible words and music wild.  
With mighty whirl and multitudinous orb  
Grinds the bright brook into an azure mist  
Of elemental subtlety, like light;  
And the wild odor of the forest flowers,  
The music of the living grass and air,  
The emerald light of leaf-entangled beams  
Round its intense yet self-conflicting speed,  
Seem kneaded into one aërial mass  
Which drowns the sense. Within the orb itself,  
Pillowed upon its alabaster arms,  
Like to a child o'erwearied with sweet toil,  
On its own folded wings, and wavy hair,  
The Spirit of the Earth is laid asleep,  
And you can see its little lips are moving,  
Amid the changing light of their own smiles,  
Like one who talks of what he loves in dream.

IONE. 'T is only mocking the orb's harmony.

PANTHEA. And from a star upon its forehead, shoot,  
Like swords of azure fire, or golden spears  
With tyrant-quelling myrtle overtined,  
Embleming heaven and earth united now,  
Vast beams like spokes of some invisible wheel  
Which whirl as the orb whirls, swifter than thought,  
Filling the abyss with sun-like lightnings,  
And perpendicular now, and now transverse,  
Pierce the dark soil, and as they pierce and pass,  
Make bare the secrets of the earth's deep heart;  
Infinite mine of adamant and gold,  
Valueless stones, and unimagined gems,  
And caverns on crystalline columns poised  
With vegetable silver overspread;  
Wells of unfathomed fire, and water springs  
Whence the great sea, even as a child is fed,  
Whose vapors clothe earth's monarch mountain-tops  
With kingly ermine snow. The beams flash on  
And make appear the melancholy ruins

Of cancelled cycles; anchors, beaks of ships;  
Planks turned to marble; quivers, helms, and spears,  
And gorgon-headed targes, and the wheels  
Of scythéd chariots and the emblazonry  
Of trophies, standards, and armorial beasts,  
Round which death laughed, sepulchred emblems  
Of dead destruction, ruin within ruin!  
The wrecks beside of many a city vast,  
Whose population which the earth grew over  
Was mortal, but not human; see, they lie,  
Their monstrous works, and uncouth skeletons,  
Their statues, homes and fanes; prodigious shapes  
Huddled in gray annihilation, split,  
Jammed in the hard, black deep; and over these,  
The anatomies of unknown wingéd things,  
And fishes which were isles of living scale,  
And serpents, bony chains, twisted around  
The iron crags, or within heaps of dust  
To which the tortuous strength of their last pangs  
Had crushed the iron crags; and over these  
The jagged alligator, and the might  
Of earth-convulsing behemoth, which once  
Were monarch beasts, and on the slimy shores,  
And weed-overgrown continents of earth,  
Increased and multiplied like summer worms  
On an abandoned corpse, till the blue globe  
Wrapt deluge round it like a cloak, and they  
Yelled, gasped, and were abolished; or some God  
Whose throne was in a comet, passed, and cried,  
Be not! And like my words they were no more.

#### THE EARTH

The joy, the triumph, the delight, the madness!  
The boundless, overflowing, bursting gladness,  
The vaporous exultation not to be confined!  
Ha! ha! the animation of delight

Which wraps me, like an atmosphere of light,  
And bears me as a cloud is borne by its own wind.

## THE MOON

Brother mine, calm wanderer,  
Happy globe of land and air,  
Some Spirit is darted like a beam from thee,  
Which penetrates my frozen frame,  
And passes with the warmth of flame,  
With love, and odor, and deep melody  
Through me, through me!

## THE EARTH

Ha! ha! the caverns of my hollow mountains,  
My cloven fire-crags, sound-exulting fountains  
Laugh with a vast and inextinguishable laughter.  
The oceans, and the deserts, and the abysses,  
And the deep air's unmeasured wildernesses,  
Answer from all their clouds and billows, echoing after.

They cry aloud as I do. Sceptred curse,  
Who all our green and azure universe  
Threatenedst to muffle round with black destruction, sending  
A solid cloud to rain hot thunder-stones,  
And splinter and knead down my children's bones,  
All I bring forth, to one void mass, battering and blending.  
Until each crag-like tower, and storied column,  
Palace, and obelisk, and temple solemn,  
My imperial mountains crowned with cloud, and snow, and  
fire;  
My sea-like forests, every blade and blossom  
Which finds a grave or cradle in my bosom,  
Were stamped by thy strong hate into a lifeless mire.

How art thou sunk, withdrawn, covered, drunk up  
By thirsty nothing, as the brackish cup

Drained by a desert-troop, a little drop for all;  
And from beneath, around, within, above,  
Filling thy void annihilation, love  
Burst in like light on caves cloven by the thunder-ball.

### THE MOON

The snow upon my lifeless mountains  
Is loosened into living fountains,  
My solid oceans flow, and sing, and shine:  
A spirit from my heart bursts forth,  
It clothes with unexpected birth  
My cold bare bosom: Oh! it must be thine  
On mine, on mine!

Gazing on thee I feel, I know  
Green stalks burst forth, and bright flowers grow,  
And living shapes upon my bosom move:  
Music is in the sea and air,  
Wingéd clouds soar here and there,  
Dark with the rain new buds are dreaming of:  
'Tis love, all love!

### THE EARTH

It interpenetrates my granite mass,  
Through tangled roots and trodden clay doth pass,  
Into the utmost leaves and delicatest flowers;  
Upon the winds, among the clouds 'tis spread,  
It wakes a life in the forgotten dead,  
They breathe a spirit up from their obscurest bowers,  
And like a storm bursting its cloudy prison  
With thunder, and with whirlwind, has arisen  
Out of the lampless caves of unimagined being:  
With earthquake shock and swiftmess making shiver.  
Thought's stagnant chaos, unremoved for ever,  
Till hate, and fear, and pain, light-vanquished shadows,  
fleeing,



Leave Man, who was a many-sided mirror,  
Which could distort to many a shape of error,  
This true fair world of things, a sea reflecting love;  
Which over all his kind as the sun's heaven  
Gliding o'er ocean, smooth, serene, and even  
Darting from starry depths radiance and life, doth move,

Leave Man, even as a leprous child is left,  
Who follows a sick beast to some warm cleft  
Of rocks, through which the might of healing springs is poured;  
Then when it wanders home with rosy smile,  
Unconscious, and its mother fears awhile  
It is a spirit, then, weeps on her child restored—

Man, oh, not men! a chain of linked thought,  
Of love and might to be divided not,  
Compelling the elements with adamant stress;  
As the sun rules, even with a tyrant's gaze,  
The unquiet republic of the maze  
Of planets, struggling fierce towards heaven's free wilderness—

Man, one harmonious soul of many a soul,  
Whose nature is its own divine control,  
Where all things flow to all, as rivers to the sea;  
Familiar acts are beautiful through love;  
Labor, and pain, and grief, in life's green grove  
Sport like tame beasts, none knew how gentle they could be!

His will, with all mean passions, bad delights,  
And selfish cares, its trembling satellites,  
A spirit ill to guide, but mighty to obey,  
Is as a tempest-wingéd ship, whose helm  
Love rules, through waves which dare not overwhelm,  
Forcing life's wildest shores to own its sovereign sway.

All things confess his strength.  
Through the cold mass



Of marble and of color his dreams pass;  
 Bright threads whence mothers weave the robes their children  
 wear;

Language is a perpetual orphic song,  
 Which rules with Dædal harmony a throng  
 Of thoughts and forms, which else senseless and shapeless  
 were.

The lightning is his slave; heaven's utmost deep  
 Gives up her stars, and like a flock of sheep  
 They pass before his eye, are numbered, and roll on!  
 The tempest is his steed, he strides the air;  
 And the abyss shouts from her depth laid bare,  
 Heaven, hast thou secrets? Man unveils me; I have none.

#### THE MOON

The shadow of white death has past  
 From my path in heaven at last,  
 A clinging shroud of solid frost and sleep;  
 And through my newly-woven bowers,  
 Wander happy paramours,  
 Less mighty, but as mild as those who keep  
 Thy vales more deep.

#### THE EARTH

As the dissolving warmth of dawn may fold  
 A half unfrozen dew-globe, green and gold,  
 And crystalline, till it becomes a wingéd mist,  
 And wanders up the vault of the blue day,  
 Outlives the noon, and on the sun's last ray  
 Hangs o'er the sea, a fleece of fire and amethyst.

#### THE MOON

Thou art folded, thou art lying  
 In the light which is undying

Of thine own joy, and heaven's smile divine;  
All suns and constellations shower  
On thee a light, a life, a power  
Which doth array thy sphere; thou pourest thine  
On mine, on mine!

## THE EARTH

I spin beneath my pyramid of night,  
Which points into the heavens dreaming delight,  
Murmuring victorious joy in my enchanted sleep;  
As a youth lulled in love-dreams faintly sighing,  
Under the shadows of his beauty lying,  
Which round his rest a watch of light and warmth doth keep.

## THE MOON

As in the soft and sweet eclipse,  
When soul meets soul on lovers' lips,  
High hearts are calm, and brightest eyes are dull;  
So when thy shadow falls on me,  
Then am I mute and still, by thee  
Covered; of thy love, Orb most beautiful,  
Full, oh, too full!

Thou art speeding round the sun  
Brightest world of many a one;  
Green and azure sphere which shinest  
With a light which is divinest  
Among all the lamps of Heaven  
To whom life and light is given;  
I, thy crystal paramour,  
Borne beside thee by a power  
Like the polar Paradise,  
Magnet-like of lovers' eyes;  
I, a most enamored maiden  
Whose weak brain is overladen

With the pleasure of her love,  
 Maniac-like around thee move  
 Gazing, an insatiate bride,  
 On thy form from every side  
 Like a Mænad, round the cup  
 Which Agave lifted up  
 In the weird Cadmæan forest.  
 Brother, wheresoe'er thou soarest  
 I must hurry, whirl and follow  
 Through the heavens wide and hollow,  
 Sheltered by the warm embrace  
 Of thy soul' from hungry space,  
 Drinking from thy sense and sight  
 Beauty, majesty, and might,  
 As a lover or chameleon  
 Grows like what it looks upon  
 As a violet's gentle eye  
 Gazes on the azure sky  
 Until its hue grows like what it beholds,  
 As a gray and watery mist  
 Glows like solid amethyst  
 Athwart the western mountain it enfolds,  
 When the sunset sleeps  
 Upon its snow.

### THE EARTH

And the weak day weeps  
 That it should be so.  
 Oh, gentle Moon, the voice of thy delight  
 Falls on me like thy clear and tender light  
 Soothing the seaman, borne the summer night,  
 Through isles for ever calm:  
 Oh, gentle Moon, thy crystal accents pierce  
 The caverns of my pride's deep universe,  
 Charming the tiger joy, whose tramplings fierce  
 Made wounds which need thy balm.

PANTHEA. I rise as from a bath of sparkling water,  
A bath of azure light, among dark rocks,  
Out of the stream of sound.

IONE. Ah me; sweet sister,  
The stream of sound has ebbed away from us,  
And you pretend to rise out of its wave,  
Because your words fall like the clear, soft dew  
Shaken from a bathing wood-nymph's limbs and hair.

PANTHEA. Peace! peace! A mighty Power, which is as darkness,  
Is rising out of Earth, and from the sky  
Is showered like night, and from within the air  
Bursts, like eclipse which had been gathered up  
Into the pores of sunlight: the bright visions,  
Wherein the singing spirits rode and shone,  
Gleam like pale meteors through a watery night.

IONE. There is a sense of words upon mine ear.

PANTHEA. An universal sound like words: Oh, list!

#### DEMOGORGON

Thou, Earth, calm empire of a happy soul,  
Sphere of divinest shapes and harmonies,  
Beautiful orb! gathering as thou dost roll  
The love which paves thy path along the skies:

#### THE EARTH

I hear: I am as a drop of dew that dies.

#### DEMOGORGON

Thou, Moon, which gazest on the nightly Earth  
With wonder, as it gazes upon thee;  
Whilst each to men, and beasts, and the swift birth  
Of birds, is beauty, love, calm, harmony:

#### THE MOON

I hear: I am a leaf shaken by thee!

## DEMOGORGON

Ye kings of suns and stars, Demons and Gods,  
 Ethereal Dominations, who possess  
 Elysian, windless, fortunate abodes  
 Beyond Heaven's constellated wilderness:

## A VOICE FROM ABOVE

Our great Republic hears, we are blest, and bless.

## DEMOGORGON

Ye happy dead, whom beams of brightest verse  
 Are clouds to hide, not colors to portray,  
 Whether your nature is that universe  
 Which once ye saw and suffered—

## A VOICE FROM BENEATH

Or as they

Whom we have left, we change and pass away.

## DEMOGORGON

Ye elemental Genii, who have homes  
 From man's high mind even to the central stone  
 Of sullen lead; from Heaven's star-fretted domes  
 To the dull weed some sea-worm battens on:

## A CONFUSED VOICE

We hear: thy words waken Oblivion.

## DEMOGORGON

Spirits, whose homes are flesh: ye beasts and birds,  
 Ye worms, and fish; ye living leaves and buds;  
 Lightning and wind; and ye untameable herds,  
 Meteors and mists, which throng air's solitudes:—

## A VOICE

Thy voice to us is wind among still woods.

## DEMOGORGON

Man, who wert once a despot and a slave;  
A dupe and a deceiver; a decay;  
A traveler from the cradle to the grave  
Through the dim night of this immortal day:

## ALL

Speak: thy strong words may never pass away.

## DEMOGORGON

This is the day, which down the void abysm  
At the Earth-born's spell yawns for Heaven's despotism,  
And Conquest is dragged captive through the deep:  
Love, from its awful throne of patient power  
In the wise heart, from the last giddy hour  
Of dead endurance, from the slippery, steep,  
And narrow verge of crag-like agony, springs  
And folds over the world its healing wings.

Gentleness, Virtue, Wisdom, and Endurance,  
These are the seals of that most firm assurance  
Which bars the pit over Destruction's strength;  
And if, with infirm hand, Eternity,  
Mother of many acts and hours, should free  
The serpent that would clasp her with his length;  
These are the spells by which to reassume  
An empire o'er the disentangled doom.

To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;  
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;  
To defy Power, which seems omnipotent;

To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates  
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;

Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;  
This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be  
Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;  
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The prominent feature of Shelley's theory of the destiny of the human species was that evil is not inherent in the system of the creation, but an accident that might be expelled. This also forms a portion of Christianity: God made earth and man perfect, till he, by his fall,

"Brought death into the world and all our woe."

Shelley believed that mankind had only to will that there should be no evil, and there would be none. It is not my part in these Notes to notice the arguments that have been urged against this opinion, but to mention the fact that he entertained it, and was indeed attached to it with fervent enthusiasm. That man could be so perfectionized as to be able to expel evil from his own nature, and from the greater part of the creation, was the cardinal point of his system. And the subject he loved best to dwell on was the image of One warring with the Evil Principle, oppressed not only by it, but by all—even the good, who were deluded into considering evil a necessary portion of humanity; a victim full of fortitude and hope and the spirit of triumph, emanating from a reliance in the ultimate omnipotence of Good. Such he had depicted in his last poem, when he made Laon the enemy and the victim of tyrants. He now took a more idealised image of the same subject. He followed certain classical authorities in figuring Saturn as the good principle, Jupiter the usurping evil one, and Prometheus as the regenerator, who, unable to bring mankind back to primitive innocence, used knowledge as a weapon to defeat evil, by leading mankind, beyond the state wherein they are sinless through ignorance, to that in which they are virtuous through wisdom. Jupiter punished the temerity of the Titan by chaining him to a rock of Caucasus, and causing a vulture to devour his still-renewed heart. There was a prophecy afloat in heaven portending the fall of Jove, the secret of averting which was known only by Prometheus; and the god offered freedom from torture on condition of its being communicated to him. According to the mythological story, this referred to the offspring of Thetis, who was destined to be greater than his father. Prometheus at last bought pardon for his crime of enriching mankind with his gifts, by revealing the prophecy. Hercules killed the vulture, and set him free; and Thetis was married to Peleus, the father of Achilles.

Shelley adapted the catastrophe of this story to his peculiar views. The son greater than his father, born of the nuptials of Jupiter and Thetis, was to dethrone Evil, and bring back a happier reign than that of Saturn. Prometheus defies the power of his enemy, and endures centuries of torture; till the hour arrives when Jove, blind to the real event, but darkly guessing that some great good to himself will flow,



espouses Thetis. At the moment, the Primal Power of the world drives him from his usurped throne, and Strength, in the person of Hercules, liberates Humanity, typified in Prometheus, from the tortures generated by evil done or suffered. Asia, one of the Oceanides, is the wife of Prometheus—she was, according to other mythological interpretations, the same as Venus and Nature. When the benefactor of mankind is liberated, Nature resumes the beauty of her prime, and is united to her husband, the emblem of the human race, in perfect and happy union. In the fourth Act, the Poet gives further scope to his imagination, and idealizes the forms of creation—such as we know them, instead of such as they appeared to the Greeks. Maternal Earth, the mighty parent, is superseded by the Spirit of the Earth, the guide of our planet through the realms of sky; while his fair and weaker companion and attendant, the Spirit of the Moon, receives bliss from the annihilation of Evil in the superior sphere.

Shelley develops more particularly in the lyrics of this drama his abstruse and imaginative theories with regard to the creation. It requires a mind as subtle and penetrating as his own to understand the mystic meanings scattered throughout the poem. They elude the ordinary reader by their abstraction and delicacy of distinction, but they are far from vague. It was his design to write prose metaphysical essays on the nature of Man, which would have served to explain much of what is obscure in his poetry; a few scattered fragments of observations and remarks alone remain. He considered these philosophical views of Mind and Nature to be instinct with the intensest spirit of poetry.

More popular poets clothe the ideal with familiar and sensible imagery. Shelley loved to idealize the real—to gift the mechanism of the material universe with a soul and a voice, and to bestow such also on the most delicate and abstract emotions and thoughts of the mind. Sophocles was his great master in this species of imagery.—(*From Mrs. Shelley's note.*)



THE LIFE OF MAN  
A DRAMA IN FIVE ACTS

WITH A PROLOGUE

BY

LEONID NICKOLAYEVITCH ANDRIEEV

(1906)

*Translated by C. L. MEADER and F. N. SCOTT*

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## INTRODUCTION

The revolt of young Russia against the tyranny of the old Régime under the Czars is carried, in such plays as Gorky's *The Lower Depths*, and Andrieev's *The Life of Man*, beyond social questions into the deeper problems of philosophy. These dramas show that in Russia, as well as in England, Greece, and Palestine, men continue to speculate upon the problems of Life, Death, and Destiny.

Andrieev's picture of the life of man is characteristically Russian in its fatalism and gloom. Man is a puny creature who comes for a moment out of darkness, whose flame of life is like a candle which burns brightly in youth and in the prosperity of middle age, but finally gutters out in darkness, while The Being in Gray, the symbol of Destiny, watches the passing show with inexorable indifference.

From the cosmic viewpoint what is Man "but a trouble of gnats in the gleam of a million suns"? How should one be inspired with hopes of progress on a little mud spot whirling around a tenth rate sun? Of what importance is an individual gnat, or his sacrifice for future gnats, when the whole span of man's existence on earth, measured by the light years of astronomic, or the eras of geologic time, is merely the single tick of a clock; and what are his petty scientific achievements in a universe of crashing suns, flashing comets, and whirling nebulae?

A striking parable of the insignificance of man, and the futility of his restless strivings against Nature is tersely given in a conversation between two mountain peaks, as conceived by another great Russian, Ivan Turgenev:

The summits of the Alps. . . . A whole chain of steep cliffs.  
. . . The very heart of the mountains.

Overhead a bright, mute, pale-green sky. A hard, cruel frost; firm, sparkling snow; from beneath the snow, project grim blocks of ice-bound wind-worn cliffs.

Two huge masses, two giants, rise aloft, one on each side of the horizon: the Jungfrau and the Finsteraarhorn.

And the Jungfrau says to its neighbor: "What news hast thou to tell? Thou canst see better,—What is going on there below?"

Several thousand years pass by like one minute. And the Finsteraarhorn rumbles in reply: "Dense clouds veil the earth—Wait!"

More thousands of years elapse, as it were one minute.

"Well, what now?" inquires the Jungfrau.

"Now I can see; down yonder, below everything is still the same: parti-colored, tiny. The waters gleam blue; the forests are black; heaps of stones piled up shine gray. Around them small beetles are still bustling,—thou knowest, those two-legged beetles who have as yet been unable to defile either thou or me."

"Men?"

"Yes, men."

Thousands of years pass, as it were one minute.

"Well, and what now?" asks the Jungfrau.

"I seem to see fewer of the little beetles," thunders the Finsteraarhorn. "Things have become clearer down below; the waters have contracted; the forests have grown thinner."

More thousands of years pass, as it were one minute.

"What dost thou see?" says the Jungfrau.

"Things seem to have grown clearer round us, close at hand," replies the Finsteraarhorn; "well, and yonder, far away, in the valleys there is still a spot, and something is moving."

"And now?" inquired the Jungfrau, after other thousands of years, which are as one minute.

"Now it is well," replies the Finsteraarhorn; "It is clean everywhere, quite white, wherever one looks—Everywhere is

our snow, level snow and ice. Everything is congealed. It is well now, and calm."

"Good," said the Jungfrau—"But thou and I have chattered enough, old fellow. It is time to sleep."

"It is time!"

The huge mountains slumber; the green, clear heaven slumbers over the earth which has grown dumb forever. (February, 1878.) <sup>1</sup>

In Andrieev's play, Man is born in woman's travail and pain. His father, turning to the Being in Gray, thanks God for preserving his wife and child. In Act II, the young man and his wife appear in piteous poverty. The neighbors who bring food are kinder than the Being in Gray. Encouraged by his wife, Man flings a challenge in the face of "Fate, Devil, Life," whatever it may be called, that determines his destiny. In Act III, we see him reveling with friends in fame and prosperity; "Fate, Devil, Life" are forgotten; but in the next act he has sunk again into poverty and misfortune, and is praying God in vain to spare his dying son. At the news of his son's death, he turns and curses God as well as Devil, Fate, or Life. Act V reveals him on his deathbed surrounded by greedy kinsmen and malicious old women, and dying with a final curse upon his lips. The character, Mercy, though present, is asleep and of no avail. Andrieev's first version of the Fifth Act depicted Man dying in a hovel and surrounded by a drunken rabble of battered wrecks of fortune. Andrieev came to realize that this scene was too violent, sordid, and non-typical to be satisfactory; moreover, he had omitted the idea of Succession, the pitilessness of all successors, and Mercy which, as a phenomenon in life, really exists, though she is powerless against the Being in Gray. These elements he introduces into the Revision of the Fifth Act, printed here.

Two other striking philosophical plays of Andrieev's are *To the Stars* (1905), and *Anathema* (1909). Interesting re-

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views may be found by Maurice Baring in *Living Age*, (1908), vol. 258, p. 786-792; by Hermann Bernstein in *Satan's Diary*, and *With Master Minds*; and in E. M. Kayden's "Life and Work of Andreyeff," in *Dial*, vol. 67 (1919), p. 425-428.

TEXT OF THE PLAY

TO THE BRIGHT MEMORY OF MY FRIEND, MY WIFE  
I DEDICATE THIS COMPOSITION  
THE LAST  
ON WHICH WE WORKED TOGETHER

## THE LIFE OF MAN<sup>1</sup>

### Prologue.

A BEING IN GRAY called HE speaks of the life of MAN. The scene resembles a large, rectangular, perfectly empty room, without doors or windows. Everything in it is gray and misty and of uniform color: gray walls, gray ceiling, gray floor. From an invisible source comes a feeble, diffused light, which, also gray, is monotonous, uniform, and unreal, casting neither shadows nor spots of light. The BEING IN GRAY comes gradually into view against the background of the wall, with which he has been merged. He wears a broad, shapeless, gray robe which vaguely outlines the contours of a large body. Upon his head there is a heavy gray scarf which throws a dark shadow over the upper part of his face. The eyes are not visible. That which is visible—the cheek-bones, nose, and sharp chin—is massive and solid, as if hewn from gray stone. The lips are firmly compressed. Slightly raising his head, he begins to speak in a firm, cold voice, calm and passionless, like a hired lector reading with severe indifference the Book of Fate:

“Look and listen, ye who have come hither for mirth and laughter. Lo, there will pass before you all the life of Man, with its dark beginning and its dark end. Hitherto non-existent, mysteriously hidden in infinite time, without thought or feeling, utterly unknown, he will mysteriously break through the barriers of non-existence and with a cry will announce the beginning of his brief life. In the night of non-existence will blaze up a candle, lighted by an unseen hand. This is the life of Man. Behold its flame. It is the life of Man.

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<sup>1</sup>Reprinted by special arrangement with Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

"After birth he will take on the image and the name of man, and in all respects he will be like other people who already live on the earth, and their cruel fate will be his fate, and his cruel fate will be the fate of all people. Irresistibly dragged on by time, he will tread inevitably all the steps of human life, upward to its climax and downward to its end. Limited in vision, he will not see the step to which his unsure foot is already raising him. Limited in knowledge, he will never know what the coming day or hour or moment is bringing to him. And in his blind ignorance, worn by apprehension, harassed by hopes and fears, he will complete submissively the iron round of destiny.

"Behold him, a happy youth. See how brightly the candle burns. The icy wind blowing from infinite space puffs and whirls about, causing the flame to flutter. The candle, however, burns clearly and brightly, though the wax is melting, consumed by the fire. The wax is melting.

"Lo, he is a happy husband and father. Yet look! How dim and strange the candle glimmers, as if the flame were a yellowing leaf, as if the flame were shivering and shielding itself from the cold. For the wax is melting, consumed by the fire. The wax is melting.

"Lo, now he is an old man, feeble and sick. The path of life has been trodden to its end and now the dark abyss has taken its place, but he still presses on with tottering foot. The livid flame, bending toward the earth, flutters feebly, trembles and sinks, trembles and sinks, and quietly goes out.

"Thus Man will die. Coming from the night he will return to the night. Bereft of thought, bereft of feeling, unknown to all, he will perish utterly, vanishing without trace into infinity. And I, whom men call He, will be the faithful companion of Man throughout all the days of his life and in all his pathways. Unseen by Man and his companions, I shall unfailingly be near him both in his waking and in his sleeping hours; when he prays and when he curses; in hours of joy when his free and bold spirit soars high; in hours of depression and sorrow when his weary soul is overshadowed by deathlike

gloom and the blood in the heart is chilled; in hours of victory and defeat; in the hours of heroic struggle with the inevitable I shall be with him—I shall be with him.

“And ye who have come hither for mirth, ye who are doomed to die, look and listen. Lo, the swiftly flowing life of Man will pass before you, with its sorrows and its joys, like a far-off, thin reflection.”

*The BEING IN GRAY ceases, and in the silence the light goes out and darkness envelops him and the gray, empty room.*

CURTAIN.

## ACT I

### THE BIRTH OF MAN AND THE SUFFERINGS OF THE MOTHER.

[*A profound darkness within which nothing moves. Then there can be dimly perceived the outlines of a large, high room and the gray silhouettes of OLD WOMEN in strange garments who resemble a troop of gray, hiding mice. In low voices and with laughter to and fro the OLD WOMEN converse.*]

#### CONVERSATION OF THE OLD WOMEN

What I should like to know is whether our friend will have a son or a daughter.

What difference does that make to you!

I like boys.

And I like girls. They always stay at home and wait until you come to them.

But do you like to make calls? [Subdued laughter.]

He knows.

He knows. [Silence.]

Our friend would like a girl. She says that boys are too rough, that they are venturesome and seek dangers. When they are still quite small they like to climb tall trees and swim in deep water, and often they fall, and often they drown. And when they become men they start wars and kill each other.

She thinks that girls don't drown, but I have seen many drowned girls just the same, and they were like all drowned people—wet and greenish.

She thinks stones don't kill girls.

Poor thing! Childbirth is so hard for her. Here we have been sitting for sixteen hours and she is still crying. At first



she cried loud so that her shrieks hurt your ears, then lower, and now she only gasps and moans.

The doctor says she'll die.

No, the doctor says the child will die and that she will be left alive.

Why do they have children? It is so painful.

Why do they die? That is still more painful.

[*Subdued laughter.*]

Yes, they bear children and they die.

And again bear children.

[*They laugh. The low cry of the suffering woman is heard.*]

It has begun again.

Her voice has come back. That's good.

That's good.

The poor husband! He is so distracted that he is funny to look at. At first he was glad that he was to have a child, and said that he wanted a boy. He thought that his son would be an ambassador or a general. But now he doesn't want anything, neither a boy nor a girl, and he only runs about distractedly and weeps.

When her throes begin, he strains too, and flushes.

When they sent him to the drug store for some medicine he rode up and down past the store for two hours and could not remember what he wanted. So he came back.

[*Subdued laughter. The crying again becomes louder and then dies away. Silence.*]

What has happened to her? Perhaps she is already dead.

No, in that case we should hear weeping. The doctor would run out and begin to talk nonsense, and they would bring out her husband unconscious, and we should have our hands full. No, she is not dead.

Then why are we sitting here?

Ask Him. How should we know?

He won't tell.

He won't tell. He tells nothing.

He drives us here and there. He rouses us from our beds

and makes us watch, and then it turns out that there was no need of our coming.

We came of our own accord. Didn't we come of our own accord? You must be fair to Him. There, she is crying again. Aren't you satisfied?

Are *you*?

I am saying nothing. I am saying nothing and waiting.  
How kind-hearted you are!

[*Laughter. The cries become louder.*]

How she screams! What pain she suffers! You know these pains? They are like having the entrails torn out.

We have all borne children.

How strange her voice is! I don't recognise the voice of our friend. It is usually soft and gentle.

But this cry is more like the howl of a wild animal. One can feel the night in this cry.

One can feel in it hopelessness and terror. It is like an endless dark forest.

One can feel solitude and anguish in it. Can it be that no one is with her? Why are there no other voices but this wild cry?

There *are* voices, but you cannot hear them. Haven't you noticed how solitary a human shriek always is? All may be talking, but you don't hear them; yet if only one shrieks, it is as if everything were silent and listening.

I once heard a man shriek. A wagon had crushed his foot. Though the street was full of people, it was as if he were actually the only one there.

But this is more frightful.

Rather say louder.

More prolonged, I should say.

No, it is more frightful. You can feel death in it.

Well, you could feel death there, too. The man died.

Stop quarrelling! Isn't it all the same to you?

[*Silence. A scream.*]

How strange is a human cry! When you yourself cry out in agony, you do not notice how strange it is—how strange it is!

I can't picture to myself the mouth that is uttering those sounds. Can it be the mouth of a woman? I cannot picture it.

But you can feel that it is all distorted.

The sound seems to be born in some abyss. Now it is like the cry of a drowning person. Listen, she's gasping.

Some heavy thing is lying on her chest.

Some one is stifling her. [*The cries cease.*]

At last she has ceased. One gets tired of it. The cry is so monotonous and ugly.

Oh, you want beauty here, too, do you?

[*Subdued laughter.*]

Sh! Is He here?

I don't know.

I think He is.

He doesn't like laughter.

They say He laughs himself.

Who ever saw Him laugh? You are simply repeating rumours. They tell so many lies about Him.

He will hear us. Let's be serious. [*Subdued laughter.*]

Just the same, I'd like to know whether it will be a boy or a girl.

Yes, it's interesting to know with whom you have to deal.

I'd rather it would be still-born.

How kind-hearted!

No more than you.

Well, I want him to become a general. [*Laughter.*]

You laugh too much. I don't like it.

And I don't like your glumness.

Stop quarrelling! Stop quarrelling! We are all of us both mirthful and gloomy. Let each one be as she likes.

[*Silence.*]

They are awfully queer when they are born. Funny little things!

And so self-satisfied.

And they demand so much. I don't like them. They begin right off to cry and to insist, as if everything ought to be ready

for them. Even before they can see they know that there is a breast and milk and insist on having them. And then they demand that they be laid to sleep. And then they demand to be rocked and to have their little red backs gently patted. I like them better when they die. Then they are less insistent. They straighten themselves out and don't ask to be rocked.

Yes, they are very funny. I like to wash them when they are born.

I like to wash them when they are dead.

Stop quarrelling! Stop quarrelling! Every one shall have her own way. One will wash the child when it is born, another when it dies.

But why do they think they have a right to make demands as soon as they are born? I don't like that.

They don't think. It is the stomach that insists.

They are always insisting.

Because no one gives them what they need.

*[Subdued laughter. The cries in the next room are renewed.]*

She is crying out again.

Animals have an easier time.

And they die easier and live easier. I have a cat. If you could only see how fat and contented she is!

And I have a dog; and every day I say to her: "You are going to die." But she only grins and cheerfully wags her tail.

Well, they are animals.

Well, these are people.

*[Laughter.]*

Either she is dying or the crisis has come. In this cry you can feel the limit of her strength.

You can feel the rolling eyes.

And the cold sweat on her forehead.

*[They listen.]*

The child is being born.

No, the mother is dying.

*[The cries are suddenly broken off.]*

I tell you——

THE BEING IN GREY. [*Speaks in a clear and powerful voice.*] Silence! Man is born.

[*Almost simultaneously with his words the cry of a child is heard, and the candle in his hand flames up. The tall candle burns with a feeble, uncertain light, but gradually the flame becomes stronger. The corner in which the BEING IN GREY stands motionless is darker than the other corners, and the yellow flame of the candle illuminates the square chin, the firmly compressed lips, and the large, bony cheeks. The upper part of the face is hidden by the heavy folds of the scarf. He is somewhat larger than an ordinary man.*

[*The candle, long and thick, is set in a candlestick of antique workmanship. Against the green bronze his hand stands out grey and firm, with long, slender fingers.*

[*As it grows slowly brighter there emerge from the darkness the outlines of the room and the figures of five hunchbacked OLD WOMEN in outlandish robes. The room is high and rectangular, with smooth, uniformly tinted walls. In front of the spectator, and also at his right, are two tall windows with eight panes of glass each and without curtains. The night looks in through the windows. Along the wall stand chairs with tall, straight backs.*]

THE OLD WOMEN. [*Hastily.*] Hear them running about. They are coming here.

How light it is! Let's go.

Look, the candle is tall and the flame is bright.

Let's go; let's go. Quick!

But we'll come back!

But we'll come back!

[*They laugh softly and in the dim light glide out with odd, zigzag movements, interchanging laughter. On*

*their departure the light, though it grows stronger, remains comparatively dull, lifeless, and cold. The corner in which the BEING IN GREY stands motionless with the burning candle, is darker than the other corners.*

[Enter the DOCTOR, in a white surgeon's coat, and the FATHER OF MAN. The face of the latter wears a happy though wearied expression. Under his eyes are blue circles. His cheeks are hollow and his hair is dishevelled. He is carelessly dressed. The DOCTOR has a learned air.]

DOCTOR. Up to the last moment I was uncertain whether your wife would remain among the living or not. I used all my skill and knowledge, but our science means little if nature does not come to our aid. I am much agitated. How my pulse beats even now! Although I have helped so many children to come into the world, to this day I cannot avoid this excitement. But you are not listening to me, sir!

FATHER OF MAN. I am listening, but I hear nothing. Her cries are still ringing in my ears, and I find it hard to understand. Poor woman! How she suffered! Fool that I was, insane, to wish for children! I now renounce this criminal desire.

DOCTOR. But you will call me when the next one is born.

FATHER OF MAN. That will never be. I am ashamed to say it, but at this moment I hate the child for whom she suffered so. I have not even seen it. What is it like?

DOCTOR. It is a strong, well-nourished boy and, if I am not mistaken, resembles you.

FATHER OF MAN. Resembles me? How delightful! Now I begin to love it. I have always wished to have a son like myself. Did you notice whether his nose is like mine?

DOCTOR. Yes, his nose and his eyes.

FATHER OF MAN. His eyes, too? Oh, fine! I will pay you more than I agreed.



DOCTOR. I must have an extra fee for the use of the forceps.

FATHER OF MAN. [*Turning to the corner where HE stands motionless.*] O God, I thank thee for fulfilling my desire and giving me a son like to myself. I thank thee that my wife did not die and that the child lives. And I beg thee so to order his life that he may grow up strong and healthy and be wise and honest, and that he may never bring grief upon us—upon me and his mother. If thou doest this, I shall ever believe in thee and go to church. And now I dearly love my son.

[*Enter the KINSPEOPLE, six in number. One is an unusually tall, elderly lady with double chin and small, haughty eyes. She is extremely dignified and proud. An elderly gentleman in spectacles, her husband, is very tall and so excessively thin that his garments hang about him. He has a pointed beard like a goat's, and his hair, smooth as though pomaded, reaches to his shoulders. He seems timid, but nevertheless has an air of wisdom. In his hand he carries a low, black silk hat. A young girl, their daughter, has a silly, turned-up nose, blinking eyes, and open mouth. There is also a thin lady with an extremely uncomfortable and sour expression. She holds in her hands a handkerchief with which she frequently wipes her mouth. Two YOUNG MEN, exactly alike, display unusually tall collars which hold their necks stiffly up. They have smoothly plastered hair and wear an expression of perplexity and absent-mindedness. In each character all of the qualities mentioned are carried to an extreme.*]

ELDERLY LADY. Allow me, dear brother, to congratulate you on the birth of your son. [*She kisses him.*]

GENTLEMAN. Allow me, my dear kinsman, to congratulate you heartily on the birth of a son so long expected.

[*He kisses him.*]



THE OTHERS. Allow us, dear kinsman, to congratulate you on the birth of your son.

[*They kiss him. The DOCTOR withdraws.*]

FATHER OF MAN. [*Deeply moved.*] I thank you, I thank you. You are all so very good. You are such kind and affectionate people. I love you dearly. Heretofore I had my doubts, and I thought that you, dear sister, were somewhat absorbed in yourself and your virtues, and that you, dear brother-in-law, were somewhat pedantic, and of the others I thought that they were cool toward me and only came for the dinner. But now I see that I was wrong. I am extremely happy. A son is born to me. A son is born to me like myself, and aside from that I see here so many good people who love me. [*They kiss.*]

YOUNG GIRL. What are you going to name your son, dear uncle? I should so like him to have a beautiful, poetic name. With a man so much depends on the name.

ELDERLY LADY. I should like the name to be simple and substantial. People with beautiful names are always rattle-brained and rarely succeed in life.

ELDERLY GENTLEMAN. I think, dear brother-in-law, that you ought to name your son for some one of your older kinsmen. That has the effect of continuing and strengthening the family.

FATHER OF MAN. Yes, my wife and I have already thought about it, but we could not come to a decision. So many new ideas and interests come with the birth of a child.

ELDERLY LADY. It rounds out one's life.

ELDERLY GENTLEMAN. It gives life a beautiful purpose. In bringing up a child, by saving him from the errors of which we ourselves were the victims, by storing his mind from our own rich experience, we produce a better man and slowly but surely move toward the final goal of existence—perfection.

FATHER OF MAN. You are perfectly right, my dear brother-in-law. When I was small I was very fond of torturing animals, and this developed in me a strain of harshness. I shall not allow my son to torture animals. Even after I was grown

up, I frequently made mistakes in friendship and love. I selected unworthy friends and perfidious women. I will explain to my son——

[*The DOCTOR enters and speaks in a loud voice.*]

DOCTOR. Sir, your wife is very ill. She wishes to see you.

FATHER OF MAN. O heavens!

[*He goes out with the DOCTOR.*]

[*The KINSPEOPLE seat themselves in a semicircle and for some time maintain an impressive silence. In the corner the BEING IN GREY stands motionless with his stony face turned toward them.*]

#### CONVERSATION OF THE KINSPEOPLE

Can it be, my dear wife, that our kinswoman will die?

No, I hardly think so.

Having very little patience, she makes too much of her suffering. All women bear children, and no one dies. I myself have borne six children.

But she screamed so, mamma.

Yes, her face was flushed with screaming. I noticed that.

That was not from screaming. That was because she had to strain so. You don't understand these things. My face has been flushed, too, but I never screamed. A friend of ours, the wife of the engineer, recently bore a child, and she hardly cried at all.

Yes, I know. My brother is needlessly worried. One must be firmer and take a calmer view of things. I am afraid that when he comes to bring up the child he will make him visionary and dissolute.

He lacks will-power. Though he has little money, yet he loans to untrustworthy people.

Do you know how much the child's linen cost?

Oh, don't mention it! My brother's folly is so trying. He and I have had arguments on this subject before.

They say storks bring babies. Storks!

[*The YOUNG GENTLEMEN snicker.*]

Stop your silliness. I have had five children, and, thank God, I am no stork.

[*The YOUNG GENTLEMEN snicker again, and the ELD-  
ERLY LADY looks at them severely for a long time.*]

You should understand that this is a superstition. Children are born in a perfectly natural manner, on strictly scientific principles.

They live in another flat now.

Who?

The engineer and his wife. Their old quarters turned out to be very damp and cold. They complained several times to the landlord, but he paid no attention.

In my opinion a small, warm flat is better than a large, damp one. In a damp flat one might die of catarrh or rheumatism.

One of my acquaintances has a very damp flat.

And one of mine, too—very damp.

There are so many damp flats nowadays.

But tell me, please—I have been wanting to ask you for ever so long—how can grease spots be taken out of white cloth?

Wool?

No, silk.

[*Cries of the child in the other room.*]

Take a small piece of clean ice and rub the place where the spot is real hard, and when you have rubbed it real hard take a hot iron and smooth it.

You don't say so! How simple! But I have heard that borax water is better.

No, borax water is good only for dark cloth. For white cloth ice is the best thing.

I say, may one smoke here? I somehow never happened to think whether it would be proper to smoke where a child had just been born.

Nor I. How strange! At funerals I know it is quite improper to smoke, but here——

What nonsense! Of course you can smoke.

However, smoking is in general a bad habit. You are still a very young man. I should advise you to attend to your health. In the course of one's life so many occasions arise when one needs one's health.

But tobacco is stimulating.

Believe me, it is a very unwholesome stimulation. When I was young and thoughtless I used tobacco to excess.

Oh, mamma, how it cries! How it cries, mamma! Does it want milk?

[*The YOUNG GENTLEMEN snicker. The ELDERLY LADY looks severely at them.*]

CURTAIN.

## ACT II

### LOVE AND POVERTY.

[*The scene is flooded with a bright, warm light. A large, very high, and very bare room. The walls, of a light rose-colour, are perfectly smooth and covered in places with a fantastic and beautiful lacework of damp lines and spots. In the right wall are two tall windows, each with eight panes of glass and without curtains. The night looks in through them. There are two wretched beds, two chairs, and a table without a spread. On the table stands a beautiful bouquet of wild flowers and a half-broken pitcher containing water.*]

[*In one corner, which is darker than the other corners, stands the BEING IN GREY. The candle in his hand is diminished by one third, but the white flame is still bright and high and throws brilliant spots of light on his stony face and chin.*]

[THE NEIGHBORS enter, dressed in bright, gay garments. Their hands are filled with flowers and grasses and fresh, green branches of oak and birch. They move about the room. Their faces are open, cheerful, and kindly.]

#### CONVERSATION OF THE NEIGHBORS

How poor they are! Just see, they haven't a single extra chair!

Nor curtains at the windows——

Nor pictures on the walls——

How poor they are! See, they have nothing to eat but stale bread——

And nothing but water to drink—cold water from a well.

And they have no extra clothing, either. She always wears her rose-coloured dress with the open neck, which makes her look like a young girl.

And he always wears his blouse and his fantastic necktie, which makes him look like an artist and causes all the dogs to bark angrily at him——

And offends all proper people.

Dogs hate shabby people. Only yesterday I saw three dogs attack him, and as he drove them away with a stick he cried: "Don't you dare touch my trousers! They are my only trousers!" Then he laughed, and the dogs showed their teeth and rushed at him and howled with anger.

And to-day I saw two very respectable-looking people, a gentleman and a lady, who, frightened by him, crossed to the other side of the street. "He will ask us for money in a minute," said the gentleman. "He will kill us!" piped the lady. So they crossed the road, looking about and holding their pockets. But he shook his head and laughed.

He is so cheerful.

They are always laughing.

And singing.

It's he who sings; she dances.

In her rose-colored dress with the open neck.

It is a delight to look at them. They are so young and radiant.

But I am so sorry for them. They are hungry. Just think of it, hungry!

Yes, that is so. They used to have much furniture and clothing, but they have sold all and now they have nothing left to sell.

I remember she had beautiful earrings, and she sold them to buy bread.

And he had a handsome, black dress coat—his wedding-coat—and he sold it.

They have nothing left but their wedding-rings. How poor they are!

That's nothing, that's nothing! I was young myself once and I know what it means.

What's that you say, grandfather?

That's nothing, that's nothing!

Just see, merely thinking of them makes grandfather want to sing!

And dance!

[*Laughter.*]

He is so kind. He made my boy a bow and arrows.

And she wept with me when my daughter was sick.

He helped me mend my broken fence. He is a strong young fellow.

It's a delight to have such good neighbors. Their youth warms our cold age; their light-heartedness drives away our cares.

But their room is like a prison: it's so empty.

No, it is like a temple: it's so bright.

See, they have flowers on the table. She gathered them while she was walking about the fields in her rose-colored dress with the open neck. Here are lilies-of-the-valley. The dew is not yet dry on them.

And here is flaming scarlet lychnis.

And here are violets.

And here is just green grass.

Don't touch them, girls! Don't touch the flowers! Don't



drop them on the floor—her kisses are on them. Don't breathe on them with your breath—her breath is on them. Don't touch them, girls! Don't touch the flowers!

He will come and see the flowers.

He will take the kisses.

He will drink in her breath——

How poor they are! Yet how happy!

Let's go. Let's go away.

But has none of us brought anything for our dear neighbors? That would be too bad!

I have brought a piece of fragrant, warm bread and a bottle of milk. *[She puts it on the window-sill.]*

And I have brought some soft, tender grass. When it is scattered about the floor, the room is like a blossoming meadow and smells like spring.

*[She strews the grass on the floor.]*

And I have brought flowers. *[Strewing them.]*

And we have brought branches of birch and oak with green leaves. When the walls are hung with them the room will look like a cheery, green forest.

*[They decorate the room, filling the dark windows and covering the bare, rose-colored walls with leaves.]*

I have brought a fine cigar. It is a very cheap one, but it is strong and fragrant and will bring delightful dreams.

*[He lays it on the window-sill.]*

I have brought a rose-colored ribbon. When you tie it in your hair it makes you look gay and beautiful. My lover gave it to me, but I have many ribbons and she has none at all.

*[She lays it on the window-sill.]*

How about you, grandfather? Haven't you brought something?

Nothing. Nothing. I brought only my cough, and they don't need that, do they, neighbor?

No more than my crutches— Say, girls, who needs my crutches?

Do you remember, neighbor——?

And do you remember, neighbor——?



Let's go to bed, neighbor. It's already late.

*[They sigh and go out, one of them coughing and the other's crutches clattering on the floor.]*

Let's go! Let's go!

God grant them happiness. They are such good neighbors.

God grant they may always be healthy and cheerful, and love each other, and that no ugly black cat may ever run between them.

And that the young man may find work. It is bad when a man has no work.

*[They withdraw, and immediately the WIFE OF MAN enters, very beautiful, graceful, tender, and delicate, with flowers in her splendid, half-dishevelled hair. She is very sad. She seats herself in a chair and, laying her hands on her knees, speaks sorrowfully, her face toward the audience:]*

I have just been to town and have been hunting. I don't know what I was hunting for. We are so poor. We have nothing. It is very hard for us to live. We need money, but I don't know how to get it. If you ask it of people, they won't give it; and I haven't the strength to take it from them. I was hunting for work, but no one gave me any work. They all said to me: "There are so many people and so little work." I kept my eyes on the road, thinking perhaps some rich people might have dropped a purse, but either they did not drop one or some one more fortunate than I had already picked it up. And I am so sad. You see my husband will soon come back from his hunt for work, tired out and hungry, and what can I give him except my kisses? He cannot satisfy his hunger with kisses, can he? I feel so sad. I'd like to cry.

I can go without eating for a long time. I don't mind it. But he cannot. He has a large body which demands nourishment, and when he has not eaten for some time he becomes pitifully pale, and sick, and irritable. He scolds me, but afterward he kisses me and asks me not to be angry.

But I never get angry, because I love him so. I am only sad.

My husband is a very talented architect; I even think he is a genius. His parents died very early and left him an orphan. For some time after the death of his parents his relatives supported him, but since he was always very independent in character and brusque, and often said unpleasant things, and did not express his gratitude, they cast him off. But he continued to study, supporting himself by giving lessons, and often going hungry. And so he finished his course in the university. He was often hungry, my poor husband. Now he is an architect and makes designs of beautiful buildings, but no one will buy them, and lots of stupid folks even laugh at them. In order to get on one must have either a patron or a stroke of good fortune. But he has neither patron nor good fortune. He goes about, hunting for some opportunity or, perhaps, looking on the ground for money as I did. He is still very young and is simple as a child.

Of course, fortune will come to us sometime, but when? Meanwhile, it is very hard to keep alive. When we were married we had a little dowry, but we quickly used it up. We always went to the theatre and ate candy. He still is hopeful, but I sometimes lose all hope and weep by myself. My heart sinks when I think that he may be here at any moment and again find nothing except my poor kisses.

O God, be a kind and merciful father to us! Thou hast so much of everything—bread and work and money. Thy earth is so rich. It bears fruits and grain in the fields and covers the meadows with flowers. From its dark depths it yields up gold and beautiful precious stones. And thy sun is so warm, and there is so much quiet joy in thy pensive stars. Give us a little bread from thy bounty—even a very little—only so much as thou givest thy birds, that my dear, good husband may not be hungry; a little warmth, that he may not be cold, and a little work, that he may proudly hold up his beautiful head. And pray do not be angry with my husband because he scolds and laughs, or even sings and makes me dance. He is so young and so light-hearted.

Now that I have prayed I feel better and again I have hope.

Really, why should God not give when we pray like this? I will go out and hunt a little. Perhaps some one has dropped a purse or a sparkling diamond. *[She goes out.]*

THE BEING IN GREY. She does not know that her wish is already fulfilled. She does not know that this morning two men, in a costly house, bending over a design of Man's, eagerly scanned it and were delighted with it. All day they have been hunting in vain for Man. Wealth has been seeking him, as he is seeking wealth, and to-morrow morning when the neighbors go away to work, an automobile will come to the house and two gentlemen, bowing low, will enter the bare room and bring wealth and fame. But they do not know this—neither he nor she. Thus fortune and happiness come to Man, and thus they leave him.

*[MAN and his WIFE enter. MAN has a handsome, proud head, with flashing eyes and high forehead. His dark brows divide above his nose and spread like two bold wings. His wavy, black hair is carelessly thrown back. His low, soft, white collar displays a shapely neck and part of his chest. His movements are light and swift like those of a young animal, but the attitudes he takes are peculiar to MAN alone; they are masterful, free, and proud.]*

MAN. Again nothing. Pretty soon I shall go to bed and lie there all day long. The people that need me can come and find me. I shall not go to find them. To-morrow I am going to lie abed.

WIFE. Are you tired?

MAN. Yes, I am tired and hungry. Like Homer's hero, I could eat a whole bull, and here I have to be satisfied with a crust of stale bread. Do you know that a man cannot always live on bread alone? I want to gnaw, tear, bite!

WIFE. I am so sorry for you, dear.

MAN. Yes, I am sorry for myself, but that doesn't satisfy

my hunger. To-day I stood for a whole hour in front of a lunch-room and gazed on the chickens and the tarts and the sausages, just as people view works of art. And oh, the signs! They can paint ham so exquisitely that one could eat it, iron and all.

WIFE. I like ham, too.

MAN. Is there anybody who doesn't like ham? Do you like lobsters?

WIFE. Yes, I do.

MAN. Oh, what a lobster I saw! Though he was only a painted lobster, he was more handsome than a live one. Red as a cardinal, majestic, severe. One might kneel to him for a blessing. I think that I could eat two such cardinals and a carp thrown in.

WIFE. [*Sadly.*] Didn't you notice my flowers?

MAN. Flowers! Can you eat flowers?

WIFE. You don't love me.

[MAN *kisses her.*]

MAN. Forgive me, but really I am so hungry. See how my hands shake. I haven't strength enough to throw a stone at a dog.

[WIFE *kisses his hand.*]

WIFE. Poor dear!

MAN. How did these leaves come to be on the floor? How sweet they smell! Did you put them there, too?

WIFE. No; probably it was our neighbors.

MAN. Our neighbors are dear people. Strange that with so many good people in the world a man can die of hunger. Why is it?

WIFE. You have become gloomy; you frown. Do you see anything?

MAN. Yes, before me, across my humorous fancies, a hideous image of poverty glided stealthily and rose up yonder in the corner. Do you see her? The pitiful, outstretched hands—like those of a child lost in the woods—the voice appealing to the silence of the human desert: "Help me!" No one hears. "Help me, I am dying!" No one hears. Look, Wife, look! Look! The black shadows, trembling, float apart like wraiths of black smoke from the long, dreadful

chimney that leads down to hell. Look! I, too, am in the midst of them!

WIFE. You terrify me. I cannot look in that dark corner. Did you see all this on the street?

MAN. Yes, I saw it all on the street, and soon it will be here.

WIFE. No, God will not let it come to us.

MAN. Why does he let it come to others?

WIFE. We are better than others. We are good people. We do not anger him in any way.

MAN. Do you think so? But I often scold.

WIFE. You are not wicked.

MAN. Yes, I am wicked, I am wicked. When I walk along the street and look at the things that are not ours, I grow boar's tusks. Oh, how much money there is that is not mine! Listen, my dear little Wife. This evening I was walking in the park, in that lovely park where the roads are straight as arrows and the beautiful beech-trees are like crowned kings——

WIFE. And I was walking along the city streets, where there were stores and stores, such beautiful stores——

MAN. Well-dressed people with canes passed me, and I thought: "I have none of that."

WIFE. Handsomely gowned women in well-fitting boots which make the foot charming, in rustling silk skirts, and in elegant hats from beneath which their eyes sparkled mysteriously, passed by me, and I thought: "I have no fine hat, I have no silk skirt."

MAN. One awkward fellow shouldered me aside, but I showed him my tusks and he slunk cowardly behind the others.

WIFE. A finely dressed lady jostled me, but I was so embarrassed that I did not even look at her.

MAN. Riders swept by me on proud and fiery horses, but I have no horse.

WIFE. And such diamonds were in her ears! I wanted to kiss them.

MAN. Red and green automobiles glided by noiselessly like phantoms with blazing eyes, and people were sitting in them



laughing and listlessly glancing from side to side, but I have no automobile.

WIFE. And I have neither diamonds nor emeralds—not even a pure white pearl.

MAN. On the shore of the lake glittered a luxurious restaurant with lights like the kingdom of heaven, and people were eating there. There were high officials in dress suits, and angels with white wings who distributed beer and bread and butter, and people were eating and drinking. Oh, I want to eat, little Wife, I want to eat!

WIFE. My dear boy, if you keep running about you will increase your hunger. Come, sit down, and I will sit on your knees. Now, take a paper and draw a beautiful, beautiful building.

MAN. But my genius is hungry, too, and it won't sketch anything but edible landscapes. For a long time my palaces have looked like big dumplings stuffed with fat and my churches like sausages. But there are tears in your eyes. What is the matter, little Wife?

WIFE. I am sad because I cannot help you.

MAN. You make me ashamed. Though I am a strong man, intelligent, talented, and healthy, I can do nothing, while my little wife, my fairy, weeps because she is not strong enough to help me. When woman weeps, man is disgraced. I am ashamed of myself.

WIFE. You are not to blame if people cannot appreciate you.

MAN. I am blushing to the tips of my ears. I feel like a child whose ears have been pulled. You, too, are hungry, and I, selfish creature that I am, had not noticed it. I'm a brute.

WIFE. But, my dear, I am not hungry.

MAN. It is disgraceful, cowardly. That rude fellow who jostled me was right. He saw that I was nothing but a fat pig, a boar with sharp tusks and a stupid head.

WIFE. If you are going to scold yourself so unfairly, I shall begin to cry again.

MAN. No, no. Don't cry. When I see tears in your eyes I am always terrified. I am afraid of those bright crystal drops. It is as if they were shed not by you but by some one else, some frightful being. I won't let you cry. True, we have nothing, we are miserably poor; but I will tell you what we are going to have. I will charm you with a beautiful story. I will enwreath you, my queen, with rose-colored dreams.

WIFE. You need not fear. You are strong and talented and you will succeed. The moment of depression will pass, and a divine inspiration will again throw its halo over your proud head.

MAN. [*Assumes an attitude of bold and proud defiance, and, throwing an oak spray into the corner where the UNKNOWN stands, he cries.*] Ho, you, whatever your name may be—Destiny, the Devil, Life—I throw down the gauntlet to you. I challenge you to battle. The faint-hearted bend their knees before your mysterious power. Your stony face fills them with horror. In your silence they hear the coming to birth of misfortune and its ominous approach. But I am bold and strong, and I challenge you to battle. Let our swords flash, let our shields ring, let the blows fall on our heads—blows that will shake the earth. Come forth to battle!

WIFE. [*Approaching and standing close behind his left shoulder, speaks earnestly.*] Bolder, my dear, still bolder!

MAN. To your inertness, sinister being, I oppose my bold, living strength. To your gloom I oppose my clear and ringing laughter. Parry the blows! Against your stony face, in which there is no light of reason, I hurl the projectile of my glowing thought. You have a heart of stone that knows no pity. Stand aside! or I will pour into it the seething poison of rebellion. The black cloud of your fierce wrath has darkened the sun. We will light up the darkness with our swords. Ho! Parry the blows!

WIFE. Bolder, still bolder! Behind you stands your armor-bearer, my proud knight.

MAN. If I conquer, I shall sing songs which all the world will echo; and if I fall dumbly under your blows, then I shall



think only of how I may rise again and rush to battle. There are weak spots in my armor, I know, but, though covered with wounds and dripping with crimson blood, I shall yet gather strength to cry: "You have not yet conquered, malicious enemy of mankind!"

WIFE. Bolder, my knight! I will wash your wounds with my tears. With my kisses I will stanch the flow of your crimson blood.

MAN. And dying on the field of battle as brave men do, I shall mar your brute pleasure with one last cry: "I have conquered!" I have conquered, malicious foe, for with my last breath I shall refuse to acknowledge your supremacy.

WIFE. Bolder, my knight, bolder! I will die with you.

MAN. Ho! Come forth to battle! Let our swords flash, let our shields ring, let the blows fall on our heads, blows that will shake the earth. Ho! Come forth!

*[For some time MAN and his WIFE remain in the same attitudes, and then they turn to each other and kiss.]*

MAN. Thus we shall share life together, my little Wife, shall we not? Let life blink like an owl blinded by the sunshine, we will force her to smile.

WIFE. And to dance to our songs—we two together!

MAN. We two. You are a good wife and a faithful friend. You are a brave little woman, and as long as you and I are together nothing can terrify us. What is poverty? To-day we are poor, and to-morrow we are rich.

WIFE. And what is hunger? To-day we are hungry, to-morrow we are filled.

MAN. Oh, you think so, do you? Perhaps, but it will take a great deal to fill me. My hunger isn't easily satisfied. Do you think this will be plenty? In the morning, tea, coffee, chocolate—take your choice—and then, after that, breakfast—three courses—then lunch, then dinner, then——

WIFE. Lots of fruit. I am so fond of fruit.

MAN. All right. I will buy it in baskets in the market. It

is cheaper there and fresher; though, to be sure, we shall have our own orchard.

WIFE. But we have no land.

MAN. I'll buy some. For a long time I have wanted a little plat of my own, and, by the way, I'll build a house on it after my own design. I'll show the rascals what sort of architect I am!

WIFE. I want to live in Italy, right by the sea, in a white-marble villa set in a grove of lemon-trees and cypresses; and I'd like some white-marble steps leading straight down to the blue water.

MAN. I see. Good! But besides that I mean to build a castle in Norway among the mountains: far below, the fiord; high up on the steep cliff, the castle. Haven't we any paper? No, matter, the wall will do. Here is the fiord. Do you see it?

WIFE. Yes—how lovely!

MAN. The water is sparkling and deep. Here it reflects the tender, green grass and there the red and black and brown stone. And see, here in the opening, right where this spot is, a touch of deep-blue sky and a quiet, white cloud——

WIFE. Look! A white boat is reflected in the water. It is like two white swans, breast to breast.

MAN. And see, here the mountain rises from the cheerful green meadows and forests, and, as it mounts, becomes more and more gloomy, more and more severe. There are sharp cliffs, black shadows, precipices, ragged clouds——

WIFE. It is like a ruined fortress.

MAN. And see, on this fortress, right on this spot here in the center, I will build a castle fit for an emperor.

WIFE. How cold it is there, and how the wind blows!

MAN. Oh, but I'll have thick stone walls, and there will be huge windows of one large pane, and on winter nights, when the blizzard rages and the fiord is roaring below, we will draw the curtains and kindle a fire in the huge fireplace. There will be great andirons on which will burn whole logs—whole forests of pitchy pine.

WIFE. Oh! How warm!

MAN. And see, how still! Everywhere rugs, and lots and lots of books which radiate silent yet living warmth and comfort, and we two together. Outside roars the storm, but here we are together in front of the fireplace on a white bear's skin. You say, "Shall we take a peek at what's going on outside?" and I say, "Very well," and we go to the largest window and draw the curtain. Heavens! What's that?

WIFE. Whirling snow!

MAN. It sweeps by like white horses. Look, myriads of little frightened spirits, white with terror, seeking refuge from the night! And the whistling and the roaring——

WIFE. Oh, it's cold! I am shivering.

MAN. Quick! Back to the fire. Here, give me my ancestral beaker. No, not that one, the gold one that the vikings drank from. Fill it with golden wine—more—let the fiery liquid rise to the very brim. There's a chamois roasting on the spit. Bring it here; I will eat it. Quick, or I will eat you instead! I'm starved! I'm hungry as the devil!

WIFE. There, now; they've brought it. What are you going to do next?

MAN. What next? Why, eat it, of course. What else could be next? But what are you doing with my head, little Wife?

WIFE. I am the Goddess of Fame. I have twined for you a wreath of the oak leaves which our neighbors strewed, and I am crowning you. Fame has come—glorious fame!

*[She puts the wreath on his head.]*

MAN. Yes, fame, loud-voiced, echoing fame. Look at the wall. See, here I go, and do you know who is by my side?

WIFE. Why, that's me.

MAN. See, people are bowing to us. They are whispering about us. They are pointing at us. See that respectable-looking old gentleman who falls a-weeping and says: "Blessed is our native land to have such children!" See that pale young man who is looking at us. Fame has smiled upon him, also. By this time I have built the People's Palace of which our whole country is so proud.

WIFE. You are my glorious hero! The oak wreath becomes you, but a laurel wreath would be even better.

MAN. Look! look! Here are representatives of the city where I was born coming to me. They bow low and say: "Our city is proud of the honor——"

WIFE. Oh!

MAN. What's the matter?

WIFE. I have found a bottle of milk!

MAN. Impossible.

WIFE. And bread—soft, fragrant bread—and a cigar!

MAN. Impossible! You have made a mistake. What you think is milk is only the dampness from this accursed wall.

WIFE. No, indeed!

MAN. A cigar! Cigars don't grow on window-sills. They sell them at ridiculously high prices in the stores. This is probably just a black, broken twig.

WIFE. But, do look! Ah, now I understand! Our dear neighbors brought it.

MAN. Neighbors! Upon my word, they are angels. And even if the devil himself had brought these things—bring them here quick, my little wife. [*The WIFE OF MAN sits on his knees and they eat, she breaking the pieces of bread and putting them in his mouth while he gives her milk from the bottle.*] It looks like cream.

WIFE. No, it's milk. Chew your bread more slowly or you'll choke yourself.

MAN. Give me the crust. It is so nicely browned.

WIFE. There, didn't I tell you you would choke yourself?

MAN. It's all right; got it down.

WIFE. The milk's running down my neck and my chin—oh, it tickles!

MAN. Here, let me drink it up. [*He drinks it off her neck and chin.*] We mustn't waste a drop.

WIFE. What a mischief you are!

MAN. There, everything's eaten up. That was quick work. Everything that is good comes soon to an end. This bottle must have a double bottom. To look at it you would think it

was deeper. What cheats these bottle makers are! [*He lights the cigar, and assumes an attitude of supreme contentment. She ties the rose-colored ribbon in her hair, using the black window for a mirror.*] This seems to be an expensive cigar. It is very fragrant and strong. I am always going to smoke that kind.

WIFE. You're not looking at me.

MAN. Yes, I am. I see everything. I see the ribbon, and I see that you want me to kiss your throat.

WIFE. I won't let you, you silly man. You can smoke your cigar if you like, but as for my throat——

MAN. What, isn't it mine? The deuce! That is a violation of property rights. [*She runs away. He catches her and kisses her.*] There, the right is restored, and now, my little Wife, dance for me. Just imagine that this is a magnificent, luxurious, astounding, miraculously beautiful palace.

WIFE. I've imagined it.

MAN. Now imagine that you are the queen of the ball.

WIFE. It's done.

MAN. And that marquises and counts and lord mayors are asking you to dance with them, but you decline them all and select the—what do you call him—the fellow in tights? Oh, yes, the prince. Why! What's the matter?

WIFE. I don't like princes.

MAN. Oh, that's it! Well, what sort do you like?

WIFE. I like talented artists.

MAN. Good! Here's your artist. Oh, heavens! Look at you there flirting with empty space! Oh, woman!

WIFE. But I was just imagining.

MAN. Oh, all right. Now imagine a wonderful orchestra. See, here's a big Turkish drum—boom, boom, boom!

[*He pounds his fist on the table in imitation of a drum.*]

WIFE. My dear, it is only in a circus that they call the crowd together with a drum; in a palace——

MAN. Oh, the deuce! Stop the picture. Now imagine

again. Listen! The singing violins are pouring forth their melody, and here sounds the tender voice of a flute. Listen! The fat bass viol is booming like a beetle— [MAN, *wearing the oak wreath, sits and strikes up the tune of the dance, beating time with the palms of his hands. The tune is the same as that which is played in the following act, at the ball of MAN. The WIFE dances gracefully.*] Ah, my little gazelle!

WIFE. I am the queen of the ball.

[*The song and dance become more and more lively. Presently MAN gets up, begins to dance where he stands, and finally seizes his WIFE and dances with her, the oak wreath slipping to one side.*

[*The BEING IN GREY watches them with indifference, holding in his stony hand the brightly blazing candle.*]

CURTAIN.

### ACT III

#### A BALL AT THE HOUSE OF MAN.

[A ball is going on in the great hall of the spacious house of MAN. The hall is a large, high, rectangular room with perfectly smooth white walls and ceiling and a light-colored floor. There is a certain lack of harmony in the parts, the doors, for example, being disproportionately small as compared with the windows. In consequence of this the hall produces a strange and somewhat irritating impression, an impression of something inharmonious, something incomprehensible, something non-essential and intrusive. The room is pervaded by a chilly whiteness, its monotony being broken only by a row of windows along the rear wall. These are very high, reaching almost to the ceiling, and are close together. Through them the



night shows dark and gloomy. Not a single gleam of light, not one bright spot, is visible in the empty caverns enclosed by the frames. The wealth of MAN is shown by the abundance of gilding. There are gilded chairs and very broad gilded frames on the pictures. These are the only furnishings and the only decoration of the immense room. The hall is illuminated by three chandeliers in circular form, with electric lights set at wide intervals around them. Near the ceiling the room is very bright, but lower down the light is noticeably less, so that the walls appear greyish.

[The ball at the house of MAN is at its height. An orchestra of three is playing. The musicians bear a striking resemblance to their instruments. Thus, the one with a fiddle resembles a fiddle, having a very thin neck and a small head with a topknot drooping to one side. His body is somewhat bent. Over his shoulder, underneath the fiddle, a handkerchief is carefully spread. The flutist resembles a flute. He is very long and very thin, with a long-drawn-out face and long-stretched-out thin legs. The one with the bass viol resembles a bass viol. He is short, has drooping shoulders, is very broad below the waist, and wears broad pantaloons. They play with an infinite painstaking which is very conspicuous. They keep time by shaking their heads and swaying their bodies. The tune during the entire ball is always the same. It is a rather brief polka of two musical phrases, with dancing notes, cheerful but very empty. The instruments are slightly out of tune with each other and consequently there is between them, as well as between the successive notes, a strange incoherence and, as it were, empty spaces.

[The young girls and young men, all of them very handsome, well-formed, and elegant, are dancing a dreamy dance.

[In contrast to the loud and jerky sounds of the music, their dancing is very smooth, silent, and light. During the first musical phrase they circle about; during the second one



*they separate and reunite gracefully and a trifle artificially.*

[*Along the wall on the gilded chairs sit the GUESTS in rigid, formal attitudes. They move stiffly, scarcely turning their heads. They also speak stiffly—there is no whispering nor smiling—without looking at each other, and utter, jerkily and abruptly, only such words as are given in the text. Their hands seem to be broken at the wrist and hang in an attitude of stupid pride. In spite of the extreme and sharply marked differences in their faces, they all wear a similar expression of self-satisfaction, arrogance, and sodden reverence for the wealth of MAN.*

[*The girls who are dancing wear white gowns: the men are dressed in black. The GUESTS wear black, white, and bright yellow.*

[*In the corner nearest the spectators, which is darker than the other corners, the BEING IN GREY, called HE, stands motionless. The candle in his hand is already reduced by two thirds and burns with a vivid yellow flame, throwing yellow patches of light on his stony face and chin.*]

#### CONVERSATION OF THE GUESTS

I must observe that it is very great honor to be a guest at the ball of Man.

You might add that this honor is bestowed upon very few. The whole city tried to get invitations, but very few received them. My husband, my children, and I are all very proud of the honor which highly respected Man has bestowed upon us.

I even feel a sort of pity for those who couldn't come. All night they will lie awake from envy and to-morrow they will slander us and tell how people are bored at the balls of Man.

They have never seen this brilliancy.

You might add, this amazing wealth and luxury.

Precisely what I mean: this charming, care-free joy. If this is not joy, then I should like to know where joy is.

Enough. You cannot convince people who are tortured by envy. They will tell us that we did not sit on gilded chairs—that there were no gilded chairs at all!

And they will say that they were just ordinary, cheap chairs bought at a second-hand store.

And that there was no electric light but simply tallow candles.

Why not say candle-ends?

Or wretched night-lamps. Oh, slander! slander!

And they will barefacedly deny that there are gilded cornices in the house of Man.

And that the pictures have broad, gilded frames. It seems to me I can hear the gold jingling.

You see it glitter; that is sufficient, I should say.

I have rarely had opportunity to enjoy such music as one hears at the balls of Man,—this divine harmony which wafts the soul to higher spheres.

Music ought to be good when it costs so much. You should not forget that this is the best orchestra in the city and that it plays on the most élite occasions.

This music runs in your head for a long time. It certainly takes the ear captive. My children on returning from the balls of Man hum the tune for a long time.

I sometimes think I hear it on the street. I look around, but there are no musicians and no music.

And I hear it in my dreams.

I must say that I am particularly pleased with the painstaking manner in which the musicians play. They understand how much money they have received for their music, and they wish to give some return for it. That is perfectly proper.

They work as hard as if they had themselves entered into their instruments.

Rather say their instruments have entered into them.

How costly!

How gorgeous!

How brilliant!

How costly!

*[For some time, in different parts of the room, the two expressions, "How costly!" "How gorgeous!" are repeated abruptly with a sound resembling a bark.]*

Aside from this hall Man has fifteen magnificent rooms, and I have seen them all. The dining room has a fireplace so huge that whole logs can be burned in it. There are magnificent reception-rooms and a boudoir. The sleeping chambers are roomy, and above the heads of the beds—just think of it—are baldachins!

Yes, isn't it amazing! Baldachins!

Do you hear? Baldachins!

Allow me to continue. For his little son there is a beautiful, bright room finished in wood of a golden yellow color. The son seems always to shine in it.

Oh, such a charming boy! He has curls like the sun's rays.

Quite true. When you look at him you involuntarily think: What, has the sun risen?

When you look at his eyes you think: Why, autumn is over and the blue sky has come again!

Man loves his son passionately. For horseback riding he has bought him a pony, a cunning, snow-white pony. My children——

Allow me to continue, I beg of you. Have I spoken yet of the bath?

No, no!

Ah, the bath!

Yes, the bath!

Yes, hot water all the time. Then, farther on, is the library of Man himself, and there you see nothing but books, books, books! They say he is very wise, and you could infer that from his books.

I once saw the garden. Have you seen it?

No, I have not had that pleasure.

Well, I saw the garden, and I must say that it charmed me. Just picture to yourself lawns of emerald, incredibly smooth,

and down the middle two paths sprinkled with fine, red sand.  
Then flowers, even palms!

Even palms?

Yes, even palms. And all the trees are clipped, too, some of them like pyramids, others like green columns. And there is a fountain and shining, colored globes, and in the midst of the green grass stand little plaster-of-paris gnomes and mountain goats.

How costly!

How gorgeous!

*[For some time they repeat abruptly: "How costly!"  
"How gorgeous!"]*

Man did me the honor of showing me his stables and his carriage houses, and I expressed my unqualified approval of his horses and carriages. In particular, the automobile made a peculiarly deep impression on me.

And—think of it!—he has as many as seven servants! A man and woman cook, two chambermaids, gardeners, the——

You left out the coachman.

Oh, yes, of course, the coachman.

And they themselves do nothing. They are so important.

Everybody agrees that it is a great honor to be guest of Man.

But don't you find this music somewhat monotonous?

Dear me, no! I don't find it so, and I am surprised that you do. Don't you see what kind of musicians these are?

As for me, I should like to hear this music all my life long. There is something in it which thrills me.

And me.

And me.

Under its spell how delightful it is to give oneself up to sweet dreams of bliss——

And to be wafted away in them to the interstellar spheres.

How fine!

How costly!

How gorgeous! [They repeat these exclamations.]

I see a commotion at the doors yonder. Man will now pass through the hall with his Wife.

The musicians are becoming completely exhausted.

There they are!

They're coming! Look, they're coming!

[In the low, double door at the right appear MAN, his WIFE, his FRIENDS, and his ENEMIES. They cross the hall diagonally, going toward the door at the left. The dancers, continuing to dance, divide their ranks and make way for them. The musicians play with desperate loudness and discordancy.]

[MAN has grown much older. In his long hair and his beard are traces of grey, but his face is manly and handsome, and he walks with a calm dignity and a certain reserve. He looks straight ahead, apparently not observing those about him. His WIFE, leaning on his arm, is still beautiful, though she also has grown older. She, too, apparently does not see what is going on about her, and with a somewhat strange, almost fixed, gaze looks straight before her. Both are richly dressed.]

[Immediately behind MAN walk his FRIENDS. They all resemble one another, having noble faces, open, high foreheads, and honest eyes. As they walk proudly forward with chests thrown out and with confident, firm tread, they look from side to side condescendingly and with a slightly scornful air. All have white roses in their buttonholes.]

[A little way behind them come the ENEMIES of MAN. They also resemble one another closely. All have depraved faces, low foreheads, and long, monkey-like arms. They walk restlessly, jostling each other, crouching, hiding behind each other, and casting sideways under their brows keen, sneaking, envious glances. In their buttonholes are yellow roses.]

*[In this manner they pass slowly, without speaking, across the hall. The sound of the footsteps, the music, and the exclamations of the guests produce a confused and markedly inharmonious noise.]*

### THE GUESTS

There they are! There they are! What an honor!  
How handsome he is!  
What a manly face!  
Look! Look!  
He doesn't even glance at us.  
He doesn't see us.  
We are his guests.  
What an honor! What an honor!  
And she, look, look!  
How beautiful she is!  
How proud!  
Do just look at her diamonds!  
Diamonds! Diamonds!  
Pearls! Pearls!  
Rubies!  
How gorgeous! What an honor!  
Honor! Honor! Honor!

*[They repeat the exclamations.]*

And there come the Friends of Man.  
Look, look! There are the Friends of Man.  
What noble faces!  
What a proud walk!  
They bask in his fame.  
How they love him!  
How faithful they are to him!  
What an honor to be a Friend of Man!  
They look upon everything as if it were their own.  
They feel at home here.

What an honor!  
Honor! Honor! Honor!

*[They repeat the exclamations.]*

And there are the Enemies of Man!  
Look, look! The Enemies of Man!  
They walk like whipped dogs.  
Man has humbled them.  
He has muzzled them.  
See how they wag their tails.  
How they slink along!  
They jostle each other.  
Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!

*[They laugh.]*

What villainous faces!  
What greedy glances!  
Cowards!  
Envious!  
They are afraid to look at us.  
They feel that we are at home here.  
We must scare them still more.  
Man will be grateful to us.  
Scare them, scare them!  
Boo! Boo!

*[They shout at the ENEMIES of MAN, intermingling the cry, "Boo! Boo!" with their laughter. The ENEMIES crowd together and cast timid but sharp glances from side to side.]*

They're gone! They're gone! They're gone!  
They are going out! They are going out!  
What an honor!  
They are going out!  
Boo! Boo! Ha! Ha! Ha!

*[The procession disappears through the door at the left. A period of silence follows. The music is not so loud, and the dancers gradually fill the room.]*



Where did they go?

I think they went to the dining-room. They are serving dinner there.

Probably they will soon invite us, too. Don't you see some one looking for us?

Indeed, it's high time. If one dines too late, one sleeps badly.

For my part, I dine very early.

A late dinner sits heavy on the stomach.

The music is still playing.

And they are still dancing. I am surprised that they can hold out so long.

How gorgeous!

How sumptuous!

Do you know for how many persons the table is laid?

I had no chance to count. The butler came in and I took occasion to withdraw.

It cannot be that they have forgotten us.

Man, you see, is so proud, and we are so petty.

Your remark is quite uncalled for. My husband says that we show him honor by attending. We are quite wealthy ourselves.

If you take into account the reputation of his Wife——

Don't you see some one looking for us? Perhaps they are looking for us in the other rooms.

How rich——

In my opinion one may quite easily become rich by handling other people's money carelessly.

Silence! Only his Enemies say that——

Well, there are perfectly honorable people among them. I am bound to say that my husband——

Dear me! How late it is!

Apparently there is some misunderstanding. I cannot believe that they have simply forgotten us.

Evidently you understand life and human nature very little, if you think that.

I am surprised. We ourselves are quite wealthy——

I think I heard some one calling us.

You only imagined it. No one called us, and, to speak frankly, I don't understand why we have come to a house with such a reputation. One should be careful in the selection of one's associates.

[A SERVANT IN LIVERY *appears at the door.*]

SERVANT. Man and his Wife invite their honored guests to come to table.

[*The GUESTS rise hastily.*]

What a gorgeous livery!

He has invited us!

I said there was some misunderstanding.

Man is so kind. Probably they are themselves not yet seated.

I asked whether there was not some one looking for us.

What a livery!

They say the dinner is magnificent.

Nothing can be bad in the house of Man.

What music! What an honor to be at the ball of Man!

Let those envy us who——

How gorgeous!

How sumptuous!

What an honor!

What an honor!

[*Repeating these words they withdraw one after another, and the hall becomes empty. The dancers, couple after couple, stop dancing, and without speaking walk out after the other guests. For some little time afterward one couple circle about, but they, too, soon follow the others. The musicians, however, continue to play with the same desperate painstaking.*]

[*A lackey extinguishes the chandeliers, leaving only one*

*light in the farthest chandelier, and goes out. In the dimness that ensues, the figures of the musicians can be seen as vague, wavering forms, their bodies rocking with their instruments. The BEING IN GRAY stands out sharply. The flame of the candle flickers and illuminates his stony face and chin with a bright, yellowish light.*

[*Without raising his head, he turns and, illuminated by the flame of the candle, walks with calm and silent footsteps across the hall to the door through which MAN passed, and disappears through it.*]

CURTAIN.

## ACT IV

### MISFORTUNE

[*A large, rectangular room of a gloomy aspect. The walls, ceiling, and floor are smooth and dark. In the rear wall are two tall, eight-paned, curtainless windows, between which is a low door. Two similar windows are in the right wall. Night is looking in at the windows, and when the door is open the same deep blackness peers quickly into the room. In general, however much light there may be in the rooms of MAN, the large, dark, windows seem to devour it.*

[*The left wall is pierced by a single low door leading into the inner apartments. Against this wall stands a broad divan covered with dark cloth. At the window on the right is the work-table of MAN, very plain and cheap. On it is a dimly burning lamp with a dark shade, under which a design spread out on the table makes a yellow square. On the table also are a child's toys—a little soldier cap, a wooden horse without a tail, and a red, long-nosed clown with bells. Against the wall between the windows is a*

*shabby old bookcase, entirely empty. On the shelves can be seen streaks of dust, showing that the books have been recently removed. There is but one chair.*

[*In a corner darker than the other corners stands the BEING IN GRAY, called HE. The candle in his hand is no higher than it is broad. It is only a stub and is beginning to flatten out as it melts. It burns with a reddish, flickering light and casts red spots upon the BEING'S stony face and chin.*]

[*MAN'S only servant, an OLD WOMAN, is seated in the chair. She speaks in a monotonous voice, addressing an imaginary companion:*]

Man is poor again. He had many valuable things—horses, and carriages, and even an automobile—but everything is gone now, and of all his servants I alone am left. In this room and in two others there are still some fine things, like the divan there and the bookcase, but in the remaining twelve rooms there is nothing. They stand empty and dark. Day and night the rats run about in them and fight and shriek. People are afraid of the rats, but I am not. It's all the same to me.

For a long time an iron plate has been hanging at the carriage entrance with a notice that the house is for sale, but nobody buys. The plate is rusty and the letters on it are worn away by the rains, but no one comes and no one buys. No one has use for the old house. But perhaps some one will buy some day. Then we shall go and hunt for another place, and the new place will seem very strange. My mistress will begin to weep, and perhaps even the old gentleman will weep. But not I. It's all the same to me.

You wonder where the wealth has gone? I don't know. Perhaps you are surprised at that, but, you see, all my life I have worked in private families and I frequently have seen their money disappear quietly through some crevice or other. So it was with this family. At first there was much; then there was less; then nothing at all. Customers used to come

and give orders, and then they stopped coming. Once I asked the lady why this was so, and she answered: "They cease to like what they used to like. They cease to love what they used to love." I asked: "How can it be that people cease to like a thing when once they have come to like it?" She did not answer and began to cry. But I didn't. It's all the same to me. It's all the same to me.

As long as they pay me, I will live with them. If they stop paying, I will go somewhere else and live with others. I have cooked for them; when I leave, I shall cook for others; and after a while, I'll stop entirely; for I shall be old and my eyesight poor. Then they will drive me away and say: "Go where you like. We will hire some one else." But what of that? I'll go. It's all the same to me.

People are surprised at me. They say it is frightful to live here; that it is frightful to sit evenings with only the wind whistling in the chimney and the rats shrieking and gnawing.

I don't know; perhaps it is frightful, only I don't think about it. Why should I? They sit quietly and look at each other and listen to the wind, and I sit by myself alone in the kitchen and also listen to the wind. Isn't it the same wind that whistles in our ears? Young people used to come and visit their son, and then they would all laugh and sing and go into the empty rooms and chase away the rats. But no one comes to me and I sit alone, all alone. There is no one to talk with, so I talk to myself. It's all the same to me.

And so they are in straits. Three days ago another misfortune came. The young gentleman went out for a walk. He put his hat on one side of his head and smoothed back his hair, as young men do. But a wicked man threw a stone at him from behind a corner and cracked his skull like a nut. They brought him home and laid him down, and he is lying there now, dying—or perhaps he will live. Who knows? The master and the mistress wept, and then they took all the books and loaded them on a dray and sold them; and now they have hired a nurse with the money and bought medicine. They even bought some grapes. So the books were of some

use after all. However, he can't eat the grapes. He can't even look at them. So they lie there by him on a plate—just lie there.

[DOCTOR enters by the outside door. He is gloomy and much worried.]

DOCTOR. Am I in the right house? Do you know, old lady? I am the doctor. I make many calls and often I go to the wrong place. They call me here, they call me there; but all the houses look alike and the people are tiresome in all of them. Is this the right place?

OLD WOMAN. I don't know.

DOCTOR. Just let me look in my note-book. Is there a child here with sore throat—choking?

OLD WOMAN. No.

DOCTOR. Young man choking on a bone?

OLD WOMAN. No.

DOCTOR. Man here who suddenly went crazy from poverty and killed his wife and two children with an ax? There ought to be four in all.

OLD WOMAN. No.

DOCTOR. Young girl whose heart has stopped beating? Don't lie to me, old woman. I think she is here.

OLD WOMAN. No.

DOCTOR. No? I believe you. You seem to speak sincerely. Have you a young man whose skull was broken with a stone and who is dying?

OLD WOMAN. Yes. Go through that door at the left into the next room; but don't go farther, or the rats will eat you.

DOCTOR. Very well. They're always ringing my door-bell, day and night. See, it's night now. The street lights are all put out, but I am still on the go. I often make mistakes, old woman.

[He goes out through the door which leads to the inner part of the house.]



OLD WOMAN. One doctor attended him but didn't cure him, and now there is another, and probably he won't cure him, either. But what's the odds? Their son will die and we shall be left alone in the house. I shall sit in the kitchen and talk to myself, and they will sit in this room in silence, thinking, and there will be one more room for the rats to run and fight in. Let them run and fight. It's all the same to me. It's all the same to me.

You ask me why the wicked man hit the young master? I don't know. How should I know why people kill one another? One threw a stone from behind a corner and ran away, and the other fell down, and now he is dying. That's all I know. They say that our young master was kind and brave and always took the part of the wretched. I don't know. It's all the same to me. Good or bad, young or old, alive or dead, it's all the same to me. It's all the same to me.

As long as they pay me, I'll stay. If they stop paying, I'll go somewhere else and cook for others; and after a while I'll stop entirely; for I shall be old, and my eyesight poor, and I shan't be able to tell salt from sugar. Then they will drive me away, and say: "Go where you like. We will hire some one else." But what of that? I'll go. It's all the same to me. Here or there or nowhere—it's all the same to me, all the same to me.

[*Enter DOCTOR, MAN, and his WIFE. MAN and his WIFE have perceptibly aged, and are entirely grey. MAN's long hair, rising high above his head, and his large beard make his head resemble that of a lion. Though he walks slightly bent, he holds his head erect and looks out sternly and resolutely from beneath his grey brows. When he looks at anything near, he puts on large spectacles with silver rims.*]

DOCTOR. Your son has fallen into a sound sleep. Don't wake him up. Perhaps the sleep will do him good. You go



to sleep, too. If a man has time to sleep, he ought to sleep, and not to walk about and talk.

WIFE. Thank you, doctor. You have so reassured us. Will you not come again to-morrow?

DOCTOR. I will come to-morrow and the day after to-morrow. You go to sleep, too, old woman. It's already night and time for every one to sleep. Do I go through this door? I frequently make mistakes.

*[He goes out. The OLD WOMAN also goes out. MAN and his WIFE remain.]*

MAN. See, Wife, here is a design I began before our son was hurt. When I had drawn this line I stopped and said to myself: "After I have rested a little I will go to work again." How simple a line it is; how quiet and yet how frightful! Perhaps it is the last that I shall draw while our son is alive. How calm, how simple it is, and yet how full of foreboding!

WIFE. Don't worry, my dear. Dismiss these apprehensions. I believe that the doctor told the truth and that our son will recover.

MAN. But are you not worried? Look at yourself in the mirror. You are as white as your hair, my dear companion.

WIFE. Of course I am a little anxious; still I am sure there is no danger.

MAN. My poor armor-bearer! Steadfast guardian of my blunted sword! Now, as always, you beguile and cheer me by your sincerity and devotion. Your old knight is now broken and his withered hand cannot long hold his weapon. But what is this? Our son's toys! Who put them here?

WIFE. My dear, you forget. You put them here yourself some time ago. You said then that you could work better with these simple child's toys lying before you.

MAN. Oh, yes; I have forgotten. But now they are like instruments of torture and execution to a man condemned to death. When a child dies, his toys become a curse to the living. Oh, Wife, Wife! The very sight of them is terrible!

WIFE. We bought them when we were poor. It saddens me to look at them. Poor, dear toys!

MAN. I cannot bear it. I must take them in my hands. See, here is the horse with the broken tail. "Gid-ap, gid-ap, horsie! Where are you galloping?" "Far, papa, far away into the fields and the green woods." "Take me with you, horsie." "Gid-ap, gid-ap! Climb on, dear papa—" And here's the soldier's cap made of pasteboard. Poor little cap, which I myself tried on laughingly when I bought it in the shop: "Who are you?" "I am a knight, papa. I am the strongest, bravest knight that ever was." "Where are you going, my little knight?" "I am going to kill the dragon, dear papa. I am going to free the captives, papa." "Ride on, ride on, my little knight!" [*The WIFE of MAN weeps*] And see, here is our clown, just as he always looked, with his dear, stupid grin. He is as tattered as if he had been through a hundred fights, but he is still laughing and his nose is as red as ever. Come, ring your bells, my friend, as you used to ring them. You can't? Only one bell left, you say? Well, then, I'll throw you on the floor. [*He throws the toy down.*]

WIFE. What are you doing? Remember how often our child has kissed his funny little face.

MAN. Yes, I was wrong. Forgive me, my dear, and you, little toy, forgive me, too. [*He picks up the toy, bending his knees with difficulty*] Still smiling! Come, I will lay you a little farther away. Don't be angry; I cannot look at your smile just now. Go and smile somewhere else.

WIFE. Your words wring my heart. Believe me, our son will recover. Would it be just for the young to die before the old?

MAN. Where have you ever seen justice in this world, Wife?

WIFE. My beloved, I beg you, kneel with me in prayer to God.

MAN. It is hard for my old knees to bend.

WIFE. Bend them—it is your duty.

MAN. God will not hear me, for never yet have I troubled his ear either with praise or with petition. Do you pray; you are the mother.

WIFE. No, you must pray; you are the father. If a father doesn't pray for his son, who will? To whose hands will you commit him? Could I speak alone as we two can speak together?

MAN. Let it be as you say. Perhaps, if I bend my aged knees, eternal justice will answer.

*[They both fall on their knees, their faces turned toward the corner where the UNKNOWN stands motionless, and their hands folded on their breasts in attitude of prayer.]*

#### PRAYER OF THE MOTHER

O God, I beseech you, let my son live. That is all I know, that is all I can say—only this one thing: "God, let my son live." I cannot frame other words. All about me is dark. All is falling away. I understand nothing, and my soul is so filled with horror, O Lord, that I can say only one thing. O God, let my son live, let my son live! Let him live! Forgive me for uttering so poor a prayer, but I cannot do otherwise, O Lord; you know I cannot. Look upon me, only look upon me. Do you see, do you see how my head trembles? Do you see how my hands shake? And what are my hands, O Lord? Have mercy upon him! He is so young. He has a birthmark on his right arm. Let him live, if only a little while, only a little while! He is only a child, and so innocent. He still loves sweets, and I bought him some grapes. Have mercy, have mercy!

*[She weeps silently, covering her face with her hands. Without looking at her MAN speaks.]*

#### PRAYER OF THE FATHER

See, I am praying to you. I have bent my aged knees. I have fallen in the dust before you. See, I kiss the earth. Perhaps I have sometimes offended you. In that case, pardon me, pardon me. It is true that I have been presumptuous and

overbold, that I have demanded instead of beseeching, and that I have often reproached you for your acts. Pardon me. If you desire, if such is your will, punish me. Only spare my son; spare him, I pray you. I do not beg for mercy or for pity; no, I beg only for justice. You are old and I, too, as you see, am old. You will understand my prayer the better for that. Wicked people tried to kill him, people who by their evil deeds insult you and pollute the earth—malicious, brutal, villainous people, who throw stones from behind corners—from behind corners, the villains! Let not this wicked thing be done. Stanch his blood. Bring back his life, bring back life to my fine boy. You have taken everything from me, but have I ever importuned you? Have I said, Restore my wealth, restore my friends, restore my genius? No, never. I never asked you even for my genius, and you know what genius means—how it is more to one than life itself. It is the will of fate, I thought, and I bore everything, I bore everything, I bore it proudly. But now, on my knees in the dust, kissing the earth, I beg of you, bring back life to my son. I kiss the earth.

*[They rise. The BEING called HE listens with indifference to the prayer of the father and the mother.]*

WIFE. I fear that your prayer, my dear, was not sufficiently humble. There seemed to be a note of pride in it.

MAN. No, no, Wife. I said what was right, just as a man should speak. Should He love cringing flatterers more than bold, proud people who speak the truth? No, Wife, you don't understand. Now I have faith, now I am calm, even cheerful. I feel that I am still of some service to my son, and that heartens me. See whether he is sleeping. He ought to be sleeping soundly.

*[The WIFE goes out. MAN casts a friendly glance into the corner where the BEING IN GREY stands. He takes up the toy clown, plays with it, and gently kisses its*

*long, red nose. At this moment the WIFE comes in and MAN, somewhat embarrassed, says: "I offended this poor fool, but now I have begged pardon for everything. Well, how is our dear son?"*]

WIFE. He is very pale.

MAN. That's nothing. It will pass. He has lost a great deal of blood.

WIFE. His pale, shaved head is so pitiful to see. He had such beautiful golden curls.

MAN. They cut them off in order to wash the wound. But never mind, Wife, never mind. They will grow out still finer. Did you gather them up? They must be gathered up and preserved. His precious blood is on them, Wife.

WIFE. Yes, I have laid them away in the jewel box, all that is left of our wealth.

MAN. Do not lament the loss of our wealth. Wait until our son begins to work. He will win back all that we have lost. Now I am cheerful, my dear, I have faith in our future. Do you remember our poor rose-tinted room? The good neighbors strewed oak leaves about it, and you made a wreath for my head and said I was a genius.

WIFE. And I say it even now, my dear. If other people have ceased to value you, I have not.

MAN. No, my dear little Wife, you are wrong. The creations of genius live longer than this wretched old garment that we call our body, but even during my lifetime my works are——

WIFE. No, they are not dead and will never die. Recall the house on the corner which you built ten years ago. Every evening at sunset you go to look at it. Is there in the whole city a building more beautiful, more meaningful?

MAN. True. I so built it that the last rays of the setting sun might fall upon it and set its windows ablaze. After the whole city is in darkness, my building is still bidding farewell to the sun. That was work well done, and perhaps it will outlive me, if only a little. Don't you think so?



WIFE. Of course it will, my dear.

MAN. One thing grieves me, Wife. Why am I so soon forgotten? I might have been remembered a little longer, my dear, a little longer.

WIFE. People forget what they once knew. They cease to love what they once loved.

MAN. They might have remembered me somewhat longer, somewhat longer.

WIFE. I saw a young artist near the house. He was studying the building carefully and was making a sketch of it in his note-book.

MAN. Why did you not tell me of that, my dear? That is significant, very significant. It means that my thoughts will pass on to others, and even though I am forgotten, yet my thoughts will live on. That is very important, extremely important.

WIFE. They have certainly not forgotten you, my dear. Think of the young man who bowed to you so respectfully on the street.

MAN. True, Wife. A fine young man, very. He had a glorious young face. It is well that you remind me of this. It has filled my soul with sunshine. But I feel sleepy. I am probably tired. Yes; and I am old. My grey little Wife, do you see that I am old?

WIFE. You are still as handsome as ever.

MAN. And my eyes shine?

WIFE. Yes, your eyes shine.

MAN. And my hair is black as pitch?

WIFE. It is as white as snow, which is even more handsome.

MAN. And I have no wrinkles?

WIFE. There are a few little wrinkles, but——

MAN. Of course. I know that I am a handsome fellow. To-morrow I will buy a uniform and enter the light brigade. Won't that be fine?

WIFE. [*Smiling*] Now you are joking as you used. Well, lie down, my dear, and take a short nap and I will go to our son. Rest quietly; I will not leave him until he wakes, and

then I will call you. You don't like to kiss my wrinkled old hand, do you? [MAN *kisses it.*]

MAN. Nonsense! You are the most beautiful woman in the world.

WIFE. But the wrinkles?

MAN. Wrinkles? I see a dear, kind, good, intelligent face; nothing more. Don't be angry with me for my harshness. Go to our son. Guard him. Sit by him like a quiet shadow of tenderness and comfort. And if he grows restless in his sleep, sing him a little song as of old. And set the grapes nearer so that he can reach them.

[*The WIFE goes out. MAN lies down on the lounge with his head toward the corner where the BEING IN GRAY stands motionless. Man's position is such that the hand of the BEING almost touches his grey, disheveled hair. He quickly falls asleep.*]

THE BEING IN GRAY. Man, flattered by his hopes, has fallen into a deep and grateful sleep. His breathing is as quiet as a child's, and his aged heart, resting from its sufferings, beats calmly and evenly. He does not know that in a few moments his son will die. And, as he sleeps, in his mysterious fancies an impossible happiness rises before him.

He dreams that he is riding with his son in a white boat over a beautiful, smooth river. He dreams that it is a beautiful day and that he sees the blue sky and the transparent, crystal water. He hears the reeds rustle as they part before the boat. He is filled with joy and he fancies that he is blessed. All his emotions are deceiving him.

But suddenly he becomes restless. The terrible truth, penetrating the dense veil of his dreams, has seared his thought.

"Why is your golden hair cut so short, my boy; why is it?"

"My head ached, father, and that is why my hair was cut so short."

And again deceived, Man is happy and sees the blue sky and hears the reeds rustling as they part.



He does not know that his son is already dying. He does not hear how in a last wild hope, with childish faith in the power of older persons, his son calls him, without words, with the cry of his heart, "Papa, papa, I am dying! I am slipping away! Hold me!" Man's sleep is deep and joyous, and in his mysterious and deceiving visions an impossible happiness rises before him.

Awake, Man! Your son is dead!

MAN. [*Terrified, raises his head and gets up*] Ah! Did some one call me?

[*At the same moment the weeping of many women is heard in the next room. With high-pitched voices they are uttering long-drawn-out lamentation over the dead. Enter the WIFE, pale as death.*]

MAN. Is our son dead?

WIFE. Yes, he is dead.

MAN. Did he call me?

WIFE. No, he did not wake. He called no one. He is dead, my son, my precious child!

[*She falls on her knees before MAN and sobs, throwing her arms about his knees. MAN places his hand upon her head, and, in a voice choked with sobs but threatening, he speaks, his face toward the corner where the BEING IN GRAY stands, indifferent.*]

MAN. You have offended a woman, villain! You have killed our boy. [*The WIFE sobs. MAN with trembling hand quietly smooths her hair.*] Don't weep, my dear, don't weep. He will laugh at our tears, as he laughed at our prayers. But you (I know not who you are, God, the Devil, Fate, or Life)—I curse you.

[*He speaks the following with a loud, strong voice, with one hand held over his wife, as if to defend her, the other threateningly extended toward the UNKNOWN.*]

## THE CURSE OF MAN

I curse all that you have given me! I curse the day on which I was born! I curse the day on which I shall die! I curse my whole life, my joys, and my grief! I curse myself! I curse my eyes, my ears, my tongue! I curse my heart, my head! And I hurl all back into your cruel face, senseless Fate! Be accursed, be accursed for ever! Through my curse I rise victorious above you. What more can you do to me? Hurl me upon the ground, yes, hurl me down! I shall only laugh and cry out, "Be accursed!" Fetter my lips with the clamps of death, and my last thought shall be a cry into your ears, "Be accursed, be accursed!" Seize upon my corpse, gnaw it like a dog, worry it in the darkness,—I am not within it. I have vanished and, vanishing, I repeat the curse, "Be accursed, be accursed!" Over the head of the woman whom you have offended, over the body of the boy whom you have killed, I hurl upon you the curse of Man!

[*He stands in silence with his hand raised in a threatening attitude. The BEING IN GRAY listens with indifference to the curse, and the flame of the candle flutters as if blown by the wind. For some time the two stand facing each other in a tense silence—MAN and the BEING IN GRAY. The crying in the next room becomes louder and more prolonged and gradually passes into a rhythmical wailing.*]

CURTAIN.

## ACT V

## THE DEATH OF MAN

[*The high, gloomy room in which the SON and the WIFE of MAN died. On everything lies the stamp of ruin and death. The walls are warped and threaten to fall. The corners are overspread with cobwebs—regular, light-colored circles inextricably interlaced. From the sagging ceiling likewise hang dark-gray clumps of abandoned spider-webs. The two tall windows have been forced inward and are bent as though by the steady and persistent pressure of the infinitude of darkness which surrounds the house of MAN. Should the windows not hold firm—should they fall inward—the darkness would pour into the room and extinguish the feeble, dying light by which it is illuminated.*

[*In the rear wall a zigzag stairway leads upward to the rooms where once the ball was given. At the foot of the stairs the warped, decayed steps can be seen, but farther upward they are lost in a dense and frowning darkness. By this wall stands a bed under a sagging, torn baldachin—the bed on which the WIFE of MAN died.*

[*On the right is the dark opening of a large, cold, long-disused fireplace, in which, in a great heap of grey, dead ashes, can be seen a white sheet of partly burned paper, apparently a design. Before the fireplace in an armchair MAN sits motionless, dying. In his torn gown and unkempt grey hair and beard one can see the complete abandonment and solitude of death. Some little distance from MAN, in an armchair of the same sort, sits a SISTER OF MERCY, fast asleep, a white cross on her breast. During the whole act she does not once waken.*

[*About the dying man are seated the HEIRS, surrounding him closely in a circle of eagerly outstretched faces. There are seven of them, three women and four men. Their necks*

are greedily stretched out toward MAN, their mouths are half-opened, expressing avarice, and the fingers on their uplifted hands are hooked stiffly like the claws of birds of prey. Among them there are large, well-fed people, particularly one gentleman, whose fat body welters formlessly upon the chair; but, from the manner in which they sit and in which they look at MAN, one can see that they have been hungry all their lives, that all their lives they have been awaiting the inheritance, and that apparently they are still hungry.

In one corner the BEING in GRAY, with the candle nearly burned out, stands motionless. The narrow, blue flame flutters, now bending to one side and now reaching upward with a sharp tongue, and throws livid spots of light on His stony face and chin.]

#### CONVERSATION OF THE HEIRS

[*They speak in loud voices.*]

Dear kinsman, are you sleeping?

Dear kinsman, are you sleeping?

Dear kinsman, are you sleeping or not? Answer us.

We are your friends.

Your heirs.

Answer us.

[MAN is silent. The HEIRS change their voices to a loud whisper.]

He says nothing.

He doesn't hear. He is deaf.

No, he is only pretending. He hates us, and he would be glad to drive us away, but he can't. We are his heirs.

Every time we come he looks at us as if we had come to ill him. As if he were not dying of himself!

The fool!

That's from old age. All people become fools in their old age.

No, it's his greed. He would be glad to carry everything with him to the grave. He doesn't know that man goes to the grave empty-handed.

Why do you so hate our dear kinsman?

Because he is slow in dying. [*Louder*] Old man, why don't you die? You are spoiling our life. You are robbing us. Your clothes are torn and rotten, your house is tumbling down, your furniture is getting old and losing its value.

That is true, he is robbing us.

Sh! Why shout?

Old man, you are stripping us of our own.

But perhaps our dear kinsman hears us.

Let him hear. It is always good to hear the truth.

But perhaps he has still enough strength to make a will and deprive us of the inheritance.

Do you think so?

*[They laugh affectedly. They speak softly with assumed tenderness, but yet so loud that MAN can hear them.]*

Nonsense. He was always an intelligent man with a sense of humor, and he understands a joke perfectly well. Is it not true, my dear kinsman?

Of course we were joking.

We can wait any length of time; it is only that we are sorry for him. It's so sad to sit day and night all alone before the empty fireplace. Is it not true, dear kinsman?

Why doesn't he go to bed?

Oh, it is just a little whim. His wife died on this bed, and he will never allow any one to touch either the linen or the pillows.

But time has already touched them.

They smell of decay.

Everything here smells of decay.

*[He sniffs]*

Really, when you stop to reflect that in this fireplace he used to burn whole logs so wastefully——

Do you remember his ball? Our dear kinsman scattered his money so freely.

Our money.

But do you remember how he petted his wife, that insignificant creature!

You had better add, "who deceived him."

Sh!

Who had a dozen paramours.

Sh! Sh!

Who lived with a lackey, yes, with her own lackey. I myself once saw them making eyes at each other.

However, she is dead. Don't slander the dead.

But it is so. I heard about it, too.

Poor deceived fool!

Do you see any adornments in his honored grey hair?

Sh! Sh!

[*With exclamations of "Silence!" "Silence!" they interchange glances and laugh slyly.*]

Man has no right to think only of himself. Considering how much he might have left and how little remains——

A mere pittance.

We must thank Providence even for what is left. Our honored kinsman is so careless.

Just look at his gown. Isn't it shameful to treat an expensive garment so?

Is it really so expensive? I cannot see from here what kind of cloth it is.

Approach him cautiously and feel of it. It is silk.

[*One of the women goes up to dying MAN and, pretending that she is straightening his pillow, feels of the cloth. All watch her with curiosity.*]

Silk!



[*By various gestures, the HEIRS express their disgust. MAN for an instant rouses a little and feebly calls: "Water!"*]

What does he say? Did he hear us? What does he want?  
MAN. Water! In God's name, water!

[*He ceases speaking. Several of the HEIRS, frightened, look here and there for water but do not find any. Voices in a tone of irritation and alarm:*]

Water!  
He is asking for water.  
Yes, give him some water.  
There isn't any water.

[*They all turn toward the sleeping SISTER OF MERCY and cry out, putting their hands to their mouths in the fashion of a megaphone:*]

Sister of Mercy!  
Sister of Mercy!  
Sister of Mercy!

We are speaking to you, Sister of Mercy! The sick man wants some water.

Shake her. What do they pay her for, if she sits there all the time asleep?

If you want a Sister of Mercy that won't sleep, you must pay more. Can't you understand?

She is very tired. The poor woman is overworked.

Let her sleep. It is a pity to disturb her when she is sleeping so soundly. Dear kinsman, can't you wait a bit? The Sister is very tired and is sleeping.

[*MAN does not answer, and they all sit down again on their chairs in a semicircle. The feeble light which illuminates the room slowly grows dimmer and dark-*



*ness rises in the corners. The darkness comes on heavily from somewhere above, down the staircase. It spreads over the ceiling and clings sullenly to every hollow in the walls.]*

He is quiet again. Poor man!

How dark it is! Do you not see how dark it is?

When I stop to think that he may sit thus before the fireplace for a long time yet—weeks, perhaps months—then I feel like seizing him by his thin neck and strangling him.

Begging your pardon, sir, although you appear to be very solicitous about the inheritance, I must remark that I don't know who you are.

Neither do I. Neither do I.

You are simply a nobody—a man from the street! What right have you to the inheritance?

I am just as much an heir as you are.

No, sir, you are a scoundrel.

No, it is you who are a scoundrel.

Sh! Sh!

Drive him out! Away with him!

You are all scoundrels.

Sh! You will wake him up.

*[Savagely showing their teeth, they threaten each other with clinched fists.]*

Gentlemen, the light is going out. I can scarcely see your faces.

We must be going. Another day is wasted.

We must be going.

Well, I will remain. I am not going to leave. This is my house; mine, mine, mine!

The rats will eat you here.

*[In a fury]* This is my house; mine, mine, mine!

One seventh part, Mr. Heir-from-the-Street—at best one seventh part.

It is my house; mine!  
Gentlemen, it is getting dark.  
Good night, dear kinsman.  
Good night, dear kinsman.  
Good night, dear kinsman.

[*One after another they go out, bowing low to MAN. Some of them raise the limp hand of dying MAN as it lies on the arm of the chair and gently press it. The HEIR-FROM-THE-STREET is left alone. With a contemptuous glance at silent MAN and the SISTER OF MERCY, he swiftly and with an angry expression examines the room. He touches the walls, feels of the upholstery on the chairs, and estimates with his eye that which he cannot reach with his hand. He goes to the bed on which the WIFE of MAN died and tests the firmness of the linen, but when the rotten cloth tears in his fingers, the HEIR, furiously stamping his foot, scatters the pillows and the sheets. Then he walks resolutely up to the dying MAN and takes a position behind his back.*]

#### SPEECH OF THE HEIR

Listen, old Man. You ought to die. Why insult death by hanging back? Be off. Free living things from your dead hand. It lies on everything with leaden weight. Look! All things are waiting eagerly for your death: these falling walls, this spider-web and the spider imprisoned in its circles, this dark fireplace—it used to breathe upon you with its warmth, but now it is summoning your worn-out body to the chill of the grave. Begone! Where you are going you will meet those who loved you, both in youth and in old age, and those who were beloved by you.

[*Silence.*]

Don't you believe it?

[*He turns to the corner where the BEING IN GRAY stands.*]

Ho, you! Tell him that his loved ones will meet him there, his son with the crushed head and his wife who died of sickness and grief.

[*Silence.*]

You, too, are silent? And all is silent? So be it. But whatever may await you, begone from here. I, the living, drive you forth from life, and when you die I will bless you. I will lay wreaths upon your coffin, and on the spot where your body will decay I will erect a monument—if it is not too expensive. Begone!

[*Silence. The HEIR again walks up and down the room, but the melancholy of the place, the continually increasing darkness, and the heavy silence frighten him. He moves anxiously about, as if he had forgotten where the exit is, and speaks in a hoarse voice.*]

Sister of Mercy, wake up! Sister! Where is the door—where is the door? Sister of Mercy!

[*Silence. In various places almost simultaneously the OLD WOMEN appear, and there follows a nimble, silent game very entertaining to the OLD WOMEN. They block the exit of the HEIR; they circle about the room and, thus noiselessly thrusting him hither and thither, finally let him pass through to the door. Raising his hands above his head with an expression of horror, the HEIR runs out. Subdued laughter on the part of the OLD WOMEN.*]

#### CONVERSATION OF THE OLD WOMAN

Good evening.

Good evening. What a glorious night!

Well, we are together again. How are you?  
I have a cough.

*[Subdued laughter.]*

It won't be long now. He'll soon die.

Look at the candle. The flame is blue and narrow and drooping toward the sides. The wax is already consumed—only the wick is left, and that will soon burn out.

It does not want to go out.

Did you ever see a flame that wanted to go out?

Stop quarrelling! Stop quarrelling! Whether the flame wants to go out or not, time is passing.

Time is passing.

Time is passing.

Do you recall his birth? Allow me to congratulate you, my dear kinsman, on the birth of your son.

Do you remember the rose-colored dress and the naked throat?

And the flowers—the lilies-of-the-valley, on which the dew had not yet dried, and the violets, and the green grass?

Don't touch them, girls. Don't touch the flowers!

*[They laugh.]*

Time is passing.

Time is passing.

*[Laughter. One of the OLD WOMEN puts the bed in order.]*

What are you doing?

I am making the bed on which his wife died.

What's the use of that? He'll soon be dead.

Don't bother me. I am making the bed on which his wife died.

How kind you are!

Now all is right. Now he can go.  
When He permits him.  
Now all is right; now all is right.

*[Like a deep sigh there sweeps through the room a harmonious but very sad and strange sound. Originating somewhere above, it tremulously dies out in the dark corners. It is as though many harp-strings were snapping one after another.]*

Sh! Do you hear it?

What's that?

It's up above where the ball was. That's the music.

No, it's the wind. I was there; I saw it, and I know it is the wind. The window-glass is broken and the wind is playing a chord over the sharp points of the glass.

It is like music.

How cheerful it is up there! The guests are squatting in the darkness by the tattered walls. Oh, if you only knew how they look!

We know.

And with grinning teeth they bark abruptly: "How costly!" "How gorgeous!"

Surely you are joking!

Of course I am joking. You know how jolly I am.

How costly! How gorgeous!

How brilliant!

*[Subdued laughter.]*

Remind him.

*[They surround MAN, pressing close to him with gentle, caressing movements. They fondle him with their bony hands. They peer into his face and whisper slyly, probing the inmost recesses of his old heart.]*

Do you remember?

How costly! How gorgeous!

Do you remember the music at your ball?

He will soon die.

The dancers circled about and the music played so tenderly, so beautifully. This is the way it went.

*[With low voices they hum the air of the music which was played at the ball.]*

Do you remember?

Let's have a ball. It is so long since I have danced. Just imagine that this is a palace, a miraculously beautiful palace!

Do you remember? Hark, the singing violins pour forth their notes! Hear how tenderly the flute sings! Hear how——

*[Strains of music, suddenly interrupting the speech of the OLD WOMAN, begin to play in the room above, where the ball was held. The sounds are loud and distinct. The OLD WOMEN listen attentively.]*

Sh! Do you hear?

They are playing.

The musicians are playing.

*[One of them cries out in a loud voice: "Ho, musicians! Hither!"]*

*[The others echo her: "Ho, musicians! Hither! Ho, musicians! Hither!"]*

*[The music above ceases, and almost at the same moment the three musicians who played at the ball, issuing from the darkness, descend the warped staircase. They come out to the center of the stage and stand in a row, as they stood before. The one with the violin carefully spreads a handkerchief over his shoulder, and all three begin to play with extreme*

*painstaking. The sounds, however, are tender, low, and sad, as in a dream.]*

Now we have a ball! How costly! How gorgeous!  
How brilliant!  
Do you remember?

*[Humming softly in time to the music, they begin to circle about MAN, posturing and repeating with wild distortions the movements of the girls in white robes who danced at the ball. During the first musical phrase they circle about; during the second they approach each other and then draw apart gracefully and silently. They speak in loud whispers:]*

Do you remember?  
You will soon die, but do you remember?  
Do you remember?  
Do you remember?  
You will soon die, but do you remember?  
Do you remember?

*[The dance becomes swifter and the movements more jerky. Through the voices of the OLD WOMEN who are singing there glides a strange, whimpering note; and the same strange laughter, as yet subdued, runs through the dancers like a low rustling. As they sweep past MAN they discharge, as it were, into his ears abrupt whispers:]*

Do you remember?  
Do you remember?  
How tender! How fine!  
How restful to the soul!  
Do you remember?  
You will soon die! You will soon die! You will soon die——  
Do you remember?



*[The whirling dance becomes swifter and the movements still more jerky. Suddenly all is silent and motionless. The musicians are petrified with their instruments in their hands; the dancing women stand motionless in the attitudes in which the oncoming of silence found them.]*

*[MAN rises. With staggering, unsteady steps he walks toward the bed. One of the OLD WOMEN bars his way and whispers in his face:]*

Don't lie on the bed; you will die there!  
You will die there!  
Beware of the bed!

*[MAN pauses, helpless, and sadly begs: "Help me, somebody! I cannot reach the bed." Suddenly the scales fall from his eyes. He sees the malicious OLD WOMEN watching and mischievously sporting with death. He sees the ruin and darkness and destruction that pervade everything about him. He sees as if for the first time the stony face of the BEING IN GRAY and the candle slowly burning out. He raises his hand and the OLD WOMEN give way before him. He throws back threateningly his grey-haired, beautiful head, stands erect, and, preparing for his last battle, he cries out in a challenging voice, unexpectedly loud and full of grief and anger. In the first brief expression one can still hear the feebleness of age, but with each succeeding utterance the voice becomes more youthful and stronger, and the candle, reflecting for a moment the life that has returned, flames up high, red and quavering, illuminating all about it with the somber glow of a conflagration.]*

MAN. Where is my armor-bearer? Where is my sword? Where is my shield? I am weaponless! Come quickly, quickly! Be accursed!

*[He falls at the foot of the bed and dies. At the same instant the flame of the candle with one last feeble flare goes out, and deep gloom envelops all objects. It is as if the walls and the windows that had formerly held back the darkness had finally given way and the darkness had flooded everything with a dense, black, triumphant wave. Only the face of MAN is illumined. Low, indistinct conversation of the OLD WOMEN is heard, together with whispering and interchanging of laughter.]*

BEING IN GRAY. Silence! Man is dead.

*[Profound silence. The same cold, indifferent voice repeats the words from the far distance like an echo: "Silence! Man is dead." Profound silence. Slowly the gloom becomes denser, though the mice-like figures of the OLD WOMEN watchers can still be seen. Quietly and silently they begin to circle about the corpse. Then they begin to hum in a low tone, and the musicians start playing. The gloom becomes still more dense, the music and singing louder and louder, and the wild dance more unrestrained. They are no longer dancing but wildly whirling about the corpse with stamping and shrieking and wild, uninterrupted laughter. Complete darkness ensues. The face of the dead is still illumined, but presently that also vanishes. Black, impenetrable darkness.]*

*[In the darkness one can hear the movements of the wild dancers, the shrieking and laughter, and the discordant and desperately loud sounds of the orchestra. On attaining their highest pitch, all these sounds swiftly recede somewhere and die away. Silence.]*

CURTAIN.



## APPENDIX



## APPENDIX

### AESCHYLUS

Aeschylus, the first of the Greek tragic poets of whose work we have extant specimens, was born at Eleusis in 525 B. C. He fought in the two Persian wars, taking part in the battles of Marathon, Salamis, and Plataea; and it is as soldier rather than as dramatist that he is celebrated in the famous epitaph: "Beneath this stone lies Aeschylus, son of Euphorion, the Athenian, who perished in the wheat bearing land of Gela; of his noble prowess the grove of Marathon can speak, and the long-haired Persian who knows it well." He died in 456 B. C.

Aeschylus wrote about ninety plays, producing the first in 499 B. C., and winning first prize in the dramatic competition from twelve to fifteen times. Of these ninety plays more than seventy survive in fragmentary form, but only seven are complete: *The Suppliants* (c. 490 B. C.), *The Persians* (472 B. C.), *The Seven Against Thebes* (467 B. C.), *Prometheus Bound* (c. 460 B. C.), and the trilogy called the *Oresteia*, (458 B. C.), consisting of *Agamemnon*, *The Libation Bearers*, and *The Furies*. *The Oresteia* is the only Greek trilogy which has come down to us complete.

Aeschylus added the second actor to the Greek stage, thus greatly enhancing the dramatic effect of the plays. He is also supposed to have devised the characteristic flowing costume worn by the actors, and to have introduced the use of certain stage properties.

### CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

Christopher Marlowe, the son of a shoemaker, was born in Canterbury in 1564. He was graduated from Cambridge in

1584 with the degree of Bachelor of Arts, and became a Master of Arts of the same University in 1587. His life was as turbulent as it was short. Marlowe was both a freethinker and a free liver; consequently his life and death have been the subjects of many legends, only recently exploded. He died in 1593, killed, as was once supposed, in a tavern brawl. It seems now that he was the victim of hired assassins. J. L. Hotson's *The Death of Christopher Marlowe*, (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1925); S. A. Tannenbaum's *The Booke of Sir Thomas Moore*, (Tenny Press, New York, 1927), Chapter V; Appendix CC.

Between the years of 1587 and 1593, Marlowe is known to have written the following plays: *Tamburlaine the Great* (Part I, acted 1587; Part II, acted 1588); *Dr. Faustus* (1588); *The Jew of Malta* (1589); *Edward II* (1591-92). To him have been attributed also *The Massacre of Paris* and *Dido, Queen of Carthage*; he may have had a hand in many others, notably Shakespeare's *Henry VI*. Marlowe also wrote lyric poetry and made some translations from the Latin.

## JOHN MILTON

John Milton was born in London in 1608, and died there in 1674. After attending St. Paul's School, he studied for four years at Christ's College, Cambridge, and then pursued the years from 1632-1638 in studious retirement at Horton. In 1643 he married unhappily, Mary Powell, and proceeded to publish numerous pamphlets on divorce, politics and religion. Under the Commonwealth, 1649-1660, he was Latin Secretary to Cromwell. He was married thrice in his lifetime. By 1653 he had become totally blind, having expended his eyesight in writing his Latin defense of the English people. At the Restoration in 1660 he was under arrest for a time but was set at liberty, and during these last years he wrote his greatest poems: *Paradise Lost* (1667, 1674); *Paradise Regained* (1671); *Samson Agonistes* (c. 1671).



## LORD BYRON

George Gordon, Lord Byron, was born in London in 1788. He was educated at Harrow and Cambridge, having already succeeded, in 1808, to his title and ancestral seat, Newstead Abbey. His heritage was a wild and violent one, his father having been a dissolute army officer and his mother a woman of proud, passionate and hysterical nature. Byron inherited the qualities of both parents, and developed in addition, as the result of a deformity in one foot, an intense self-consciousness which was lifelong. After taking his seat in the House of Lords in 1809, the year of his majority, he set out on his continental travels, from which he did not return for two years. The publication in 1812 of the first two cantos of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* made him famous immediately, and he became the lion of society. His popularity lasted four years. Then his marriage ended in scandal, the fashionable world turned against him, and, in 1816 he left England for Italy, never to return. In Italy he lived and wrote for the next eight years. Shelley was there at the same time and the two were often companions. At the age of thirty-six, Byron allied himself with the Greek revolutionists and went to Greece. He died of fever at Missolonghi in 1824.

## PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Percy Bysshe Shelley was born in Sussex in 1792, the son of a country gentleman. He went through Eton and entered Oxford, but was expelled from the university for publishing a pamphlet on *The Necessity of Atheism*. His first marriage, contracted with a girl of sixteen, was unhappy and tragic in its consequences; his second was with the talented daughter of William Godwin, the social philosopher, who exercised a strong influence over Shelley. With her, in 1818, Shelley went to Italy, and here he remained until his death in 1822. On an

afternoon in July of this year his boat was capsized in the Bay of Spezzia. Shelley's body was washed ashore and cremated in the presence of Trelawney and Byron, and the ashes were placed in the Protestant cemetery at Rome, near the grave of Keats. Shelley's other drama, the *The Cenci*, is equally famous with *Prometheus Unbound* as an example of the poetic drama of the nineteenth century. [See *Types of World Tragedy* in this series.]

### LEONID NIKOLAYEVITCH ANDRIEEV

Leonid Andrieev was born in 1871 at Orel, Russia. He began writing stories in 1900, having first attempted the profession of law. His first work was almost immediately successful and attracted the attention of Maxim Gorky. Since he wrote constantly from this time until his death in 1919, the bulk of his work is large. Following is a selected list of his plays:

*To the Stars* (1905), *The Life of Man* (1906), *Savva* (1906), *King Hunger* (1907), *The Black Maskers* (1908), *Days of Our Life* (1908), *Anathema* (1909), *Gaudeamus* (1910), *The Pretty Sabine Women* (1912), *Honor* (1912), *Thou Shalt Not Kill* (1913), *King, Law, Liberty*, (1914), *Youth* (1914), *War's Burden* (1915), *He Who Gets Slapped* (1915), *Dear Phantoms* (1916), *Requiem* (1917), *The Waltz of the Dogs* (1922), *Samson Enchained* (1923).









